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**MAR A CHUALA MI**

**REMEMBERING AND TELLING GAELIC STORIES:  
A STUDY OF BRIAN STEWART**

**Carol S. Zall**

**Ph.D.  
The University of Edinburgh  
1998**





## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of one storyteller, Brian Stewart, and his storytelling. The aim of the project is to understand and elucidate the way in which one storyteller remembers and tells stories. The methods used in the study are the direct questioning of the storyteller about his relationship to storytelling, as well as a detailed comparative analysis of the stories themselves. As such, the thesis is as much concerned with the storyteller's own beliefs about storytelling as with the evidence supplied by the stories.

In the Introduction I discuss the aims of the project and explain its genesis and my reasons for choosing the methods employed.

In Chapter One I discuss questions about the nature of Gaelic storytelling, and review the scholarly literature related to this study.

In Chapter Two I discuss Mr. Stewart's life story, relying heavily on comments and material recorded from the storyteller himself. This discussion concentrates on topics which Mr. Stewart has emphasised in the course of interviews, including boyhood memories of travelling and the travelling life, related activities such as tin-smithing and horse-dealing, and storytelling.

In Chapter Three I consider Brian Stewart's development as a storyteller: his knowledge and experience of storytelling, and his own comments on how he learned and remembered stories, how his memory works, and on storytelling practices in general.

Chapter Four consists of an analysis of the stories themselves. Here I use close to 40 separate recordings of nine different stories recorded between 1958 and 1995, comparing different recordings of the same stories in terms of their episodic structure, content, and use of language. The aim of the comparison is to discover patterns of variation and similarity between the story versions, and so to identify features of Brian Stewart's storytelling and to better understand his storytelling ethos.

The Conclusion summarises the overall findings of the thesis, and points to some possibilities for future scholarly inquiry in this field.

Following the main body of the thesis, transcriptions of the recorded story versions discussed in Chapter Four are contained in an appendix, as is other background information on the stories as may be useful to other scholars.

I declare that I have composed this thesis myself and that the work contained in it is my own.

Carol Zall

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\*Photos courtesy Brian and Jeanann Stewart



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## METHODOLOGY

### Sources

Throughout this thesis I refer to recordings of Brian Stewart which were made between 1958 and 1997. All recordings made prior to the 1990s were made by collectors from either the School of Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh, or from the Linguistic Survey of Scotland, also of the University of Edinburgh. The collectors were Hamish Henderson, Donald Archie MacDonald and Alan Bruford for the School of Scottish Studies, and David Clement for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland. The recordings from the 1990s were made by me. I also make reference to some private recordings made by John Shaw in the 1990s.

The audio recordings made by the School of Scottish Studies and the Linguistic Survey of Scotland are housed in the Sound Archive of the School of Scottish Studies. When referring to School of Scottish Studies recordings, the School's numbering system is used: each recording is preceded by the letters "SA" ("Sound Archive") followed by the year of the recording, the tape number, and the position of the item on the tape. The earliest School recording of Brian is thus SA 1958/72/A13 & B1 (a recording of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn* collected by Hamish Henderson).

When referring to a Linguistic Survey of Scotland recording, the Linguistic Survey's numbering system is used. I have prefixed these numbers with the letters "LS" to indicate "Linguistic Survey".

When referring to recordings which I myself have made, I simply give the date and the number of the tape (e.g., "14 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2"). Thus any recording made in the 1990s and not otherwise designated is a recording made by me.

School of Scottish Studies and Linguistic Survey of Scotland recordings may be consulted by applying to those bodies for access to the recordings housed in the Sound Archive.

The recordings which I have made are on two audio cassettes which are attached to the thesis.

All of the stories discussed and compared in the episode charts in Chapter Four have been transcribed and appear in the Appendices, where more information about the

transcriptions is supplied in the section entitled "Principles of Transcription and Orthography".

### **Use of Quoted Material**

Where material was recorded in Gaelic, quotations are in Gaelic with a translation following in square brackets in *italics*. Where a quotation only appears in English, the original recording was in English. For more information on orthography, see the section on "Principles of Transcription and Orthography" which precedes the transcriptions in the Appendices.

Brian Stewart is referred to variously as Brian, Mr. Stewart, the storyteller, or by his full name. The abbreviations "B.S." and "C.Z." (for "Brian Stewart" and "Carol Zall" respectively) are used throughout the quoted material; other abbreviations are explained in the text.

In quoted material, the use of three dots (...) indicates a pause or hesitation on the part of the speaker, and the use of four dots (....) indicates that a word or words in the same sentence have been omitted for the sake of clarity. The use of three dots within square brackets [...] indicates an unintelligible word or phrase. The use of four dots within square brackets [....] between paragraphs indicates that a sentence or sentences have been omitted. Any conflated sentences or sections are always from the same recording, the date of which is noted in a footnote at the end of the quoted material; in no case do I conflate sentences or sections recorded on separate occasions. There are some cases in which I have made short comments between Mr. Stewart's sentences, such as "Right" or "Mmm hmm" or "Uh huh"; in these instances, I have omitted these short utterances without the use of three dots due to the fact that Mr. Stewart's comments were continuous and none of his own words have been omitted. In all cases I have tried to keep to the spirit of Mr. Stewart's original conversation and have tried not to distort or misrepresent his original comments.

## INTRODUCTION

### **OVERVIEW**

This thesis is a study of one storyteller, Brian Stewart, and his storytelling. After a brief discussion of relevant scholarship in Chapter One, Chapters Two and Three focus on Brian Stewart's life history, his relationship to storytelling, and his own opinions and ideas on how he first heard, learned and remembered stories. Much of the material in these chapters consists of Mr. Stewart's own comments, which were recorded from him in the course of interviews. The second part of the thesis focuses on the stories themselves: here different versions of the same stories recorded from Brian Stewart over a period of 37 years are compared to each other in terms of structure, episodic content, and language in order to discover patterns of variation and similarity between the story versions and thus to identify important features of Mr. Stewart's storytelling.<sup>1</sup> As such the thesis focuses on both the storyteller and the stories, and it is hoped that by combining the study of the tradition bearer with the comparative analysis of the stories we may reach a better understanding of Brian Stewart's storytelling ethos.

### **A MULTIPLICITY OF APPROACHES**

There are many forms which the study of a storyteller and his stories could take. A traditional approach might entail a collection and edition of a storyteller's repertoire along with background information on the stories and biographical information about the storyteller, such as James Delargy's classic study of an Irish storyteller, Leabhar Sheáin Í Chonail (1977 [1948]). Building on such an approach, one might relate the modern stories to their antecedents in the Gaelic manuscript tradition, thereby exploring the relationship between the written and the oral in the Gaelic narrative tradition.<sup>2</sup> Another approach might bring the tools of literary criticism to bear on the stories, discussing them from the point of view of narrative style, structure, characterisation and imagery, thereby aiming for an exploration of the literary aesthetic of the stories and the storyteller. Other treatments would also be possible, for example a project which fused the study of personality, "world view" and

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this thesis I use the term "version" to denote an individual recording or telling of a story from a storyteller. The exception to this rule is in the section on "Tale Types and Related Background Information" in the appendices where multiple recordings or transcriptions of a story from the same storyteller have been counted as one version of the total collected in Scotland.

<sup>2</sup>Throughout this thesis, the word "Gaelic" is used to refer to the shared literary heritage of both Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland. When referring to only the Gaelic of Scotland or Ireland, the terms "Scottish Gaelic" and "Irish Gaelic" are used respectively.



repertoire, such as the anthropologically orientated study made by Juha Pentikäinen of the Karelian storyteller Marina Takalo (1978); or an ethnographically motivated study of storytelling such as that carried out by Kathleen Sheehan Lambert in her 1985 doctoral thesis "The Spoken Web: An Ethnography of Storytelling in Rannafast, Ireland".

The truth is that storytelling scholarship stands at the cross-roads of many related disciplines, folklore, literary criticism, anthropology and ethnology being only some of them. This is made only too clear in Ruth Finnegan's chapter on "Theoretical Perspectives" in her excellent multidisciplinary overview Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts: A Guide to Research Practices (1992), in which she outlines no fewer than 14 different theoretical approaches to traditional material. Here she includes such approaches as functionalism, Marxist analysis, structuralism, narratology, oral theory, oral history methods, and the ethnography of speaking and ethnopoetics as only some of the ways in which scholars have recently approached traditional material, and a perusal of this stimulating book makes it clear that the study of storytelling and related material is open to a great multiplicity of scholarly approaches. While many of these approaches would result in illuminating and valuable studies of storytellers, all of them cannot be brought to bear upon a single project. So it is that I would like to explain my own approach to the study of a storyteller and in so doing explain how the present project came into being.

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT**

In 1992 I decided that I wanted to work with Gaelic stories, in order to satisfy my interests in both Gaelic literature and the Gaelic language. My Professor, William Gillies, suggested that I speak to the late Dr. Alan Bruford, then of the School of Scottish Studies of Edinburgh University, and to Mr. Donald Archie MacDonald, also of the School of Scottish Studies. This I did, and in the course of our conversation, Dr. Bruford and Mr. MacDonald raised the possibility that I might work with a living storyteller rather than with archived material. They suggested that I meet Mr. Brian Stewart, at that time an 81-year-old man who came from a Gaelic travelling background in Sutherland, in the north of Scotland. Mr. Stewart had first been recorded by the School of Scottish Studies in 1958, at which time two of his stories were recorded by Hamish Henderson, and then again over a period of five years between 1973 and 1978, during which time almost all the stories in his repertoire were recorded. Dr. Bruford and Mr. MacDonald told me that Mr. Stewart was a good storyteller who came from a well-known storytelling family -- his uncle,

*Ailidh Dall* ("Blind Alec") had been recorded by the School of Scottish Studies during his lifetime and had been described by the great collector Calum Maclean as "the best Gaelic storyteller ever recorded on the mainland of Scotland"<sup>3</sup> -- and had several international and native hero tales in his repertoire. I was also told that Mr. Stewart was one of the last traditional Gaelic storytellers alive in Scotland, and probably the finest Gaelic storyteller still on the Scottish mainland. By the time I left the School of Scottish Studies, I was convinced that I would like to meet Brian Stewart and to work with him if he was willing to do so.

So it was that I found myself one April day in Invergordon, a small town overlooking the oil platforms of the Cromarty Firth north of Inverness. I had a large, cumbersome Uher reel-to-reel recording machine with me (which I did not really expect to use during that first meeting), and did not know what to expect when I reached the nursing home where Brian Stewart was staying. I entered the home and was soon introduced to Mr. Stewart. Minutes later, he surprised me by launching into a story in Gaelic, *Am Maraiche Màirneal*.<sup>4</sup> I hurried to put a reel onto the Uher (neither the handiest nor the least obtrusive of machines), and for the next few hours, Brian continued to tell stories and answer questions on an amazing range of topics: his travelling life as a boy with his family, genealogical information, details of tinsmithing and working for the Forestry Commission as an adult, and information about learning stories from his grandmother as a boy. All in all he told me four Gaelic stories that day, and over the next two days he continued in this vein, telling more stories, singing songs, and providing a wealth of information about his early and later life, storytelling, music and travelling.

The result of Brian's willingness to record the stories with me again was that there soon existed a good number of multiple recordings of the same stories, for in addition to the stories which I myself recorded in the 1990s, there were also the recordings already made in the 1970s and the 1950s. In addition to telling stories, one of Brian's favourite topics of conversation was that of his boyhood, which he spent as a traveller with his parents and family in the north of Scotland. He never tired of discussing aspects of this way of life, and particularly enjoyed telling me about how he heard and learned stories from his grandmother, Siùsie Stewart. Thus I also

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<sup>3</sup>Quoted by Hamish Henderson in Neat 1996: 71.

<sup>4</sup>"The Seaworthy Mariner," a variant of AT 433B. Throughout this thesis "AT" numbers refer to the Aarne-Thompson classification system of international tale types. See Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson: 1961.

quickly built up a body of material concerning and chronicling Brian Stewart's early life and his experience of Gaelic storytelling.

As I continued to record Brian's stories and to question him about how he actually learned and remembered the stories, and as I continued in my review of the scholarship surrounding Gaelic storytelling and folkloristics in general, it became clear to me that I was in an excellent position to use the large body of multiple recordings<sup>5</sup> of Brian's stories to explore one man's storytelling over time and to investigate some fundamental questions about how storytelling actually works for a particular individual. In addition, working with a living storyteller meant that I could ask him questions about his storytelling which might arise out of my continuing research and analysis of the stories. Thus the idea began to develop of studying Brian as a storyteller by comparing his earlier recordings to the later ones. The present thesis combines this type of analysis of the stories themselves with the study of Brian Stewart as a storyteller, and I can only hope that the resulting project is worthy of Brian and his tradition.

#### **THE FORM OF THE PRESENT WORK**

The body of the thesis is divided into two main sections and a conclusion. Part One comprises three chapters, the first of which discusses questions about Gaelic storytelling and considers suggestions that the study of multiple recordings of the same story from the same storyteller could help to address some of these questions. It also examines ideas from related fields which have been influential in the study of Gaelic tradition bearers.

In Chapter Two, Mr. Stewart is introduced through a discussion of his life story, using his own comments and other material recorded from him whenever possible. Rather than attempting an exhaustive life history, I have sketched an overall chronology of events which have taken place during his life, focusing on topics which he himself has emphasised during the course of our discussions. Such topics include his memories of travelling as a boy, related activities such as tinsmithing and horse-dealing, memories of his family and their way of life, and, of course, storytelling.

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<sup>5</sup>Throughout this thesis I use the term "multiple recordings" or "multiply recorded" to refer to separate recordings made of the *same* story from the same storyteller on different occasions. Thus a "multiply recorded story" refers to a story which has been recorded more than once from the same person, the resultant separate recordings being the "multiple recordings".



In Chapter Three, we turn to Brian Stewart's development as a storyteller: his early interest in stories, how he first learned stories, how he says he remembers them, and how he perceives his relation to stories and storytelling.

In Part Two, Chapter Four comprises a detailed comparative analysis of multiple recordings of the same stories as told by Brian Stewart on separate occasions, in order to investigate features of Mr. Stewart's storytelling. This Chapter accounts for a large proportion of the thesis as a whole, and takes as its subject the analysis of close to 40 separate recordings which have been made of nine of Brian's best stories. Here the different recordings of each story are compared to each other in order to discover what variations may occur in terms of story structure at the episodic level, which in turn leads to a discussion of many structural features of Brian's storytelling. The stories are then compared at the level of episodic content, considering such phenomena as the borrowing of motifs and characters between stories and the use of repeatable material within episodes. Finally, the discussion turns to a comparison of the stories in terms of Brian's use of language, considering Brian's use of formalised or set language and comparing the way in which this language is used from story to story. At the end of Chapter Four, I summarise the patterns and features which have emerged and draw conclusions about the nature of Brian Stewart's storytelling.

The Conclusion recapitulates the main findings of the thesis and makes some additional suggestions about Brian Stewart's storytelling. In addition, directions for further related research are discussed.

The transcriptions of Brian's stories discussed in Chapter Four are contained in an appendix following the Conclusion. While the transcriptions are thus relegated to an appendix, they are by no means peripheral to the thesis. I have tried to produce accurate and literal transcriptions, and I hope the results will prove worthy of the effort and will be useful to other scholars.<sup>6</sup> Another appendix contains basic background information to the individual stories such as tale types, motifs, and related story versions collected from other storytellers in Scotland. Such information should be helpful to those who are interested in pursuing investigations into the background of the stories, and it is hoped that the availability of this information will encourage others to examine aspects of the stories which are beyond the scope of this

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<sup>6</sup>A more detailed introductory note on "Principles of Transcription and Orthography" is provided in the Appendices.

thesis. The thesis is also accompanied by two audio cassettes which contain copies of the stories which I myself have recorded, so that anyone interested in any aural features of the stories or other areas not investigated in this thesis may have access to them and be able to study them further.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>The recordings made in the 1950s and 1970s are housed in the Sound Archive of the School of Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh, and may be consulted there.

## **PART ONE**

## CHAPTER ONE

### QUESTIONS ABOUT GAELIC STORYTELLING

#### **OVERVIEW**

This chapter, by review of scholarly discussion of Gaelic storytelling, aims to identify questions about storytelling which have been raised in the past. By identifying such general questions about Gaelic storytelling, I seek to contextualise the specific questions which I ask about Brian Stewart's storytelling in this thesis. The chapter also considers suggestions that the study of multiple recordings of the same story from the same storyteller could help to address certain questions related to storytelling. Finally, the chapter includes a brief discussion of the informant-centred approach which has been important in folklore and storytelling scholarship, as well as a consideration of the way in which scholarly debate about the nature of "orality" can contribute to a refined understanding of the complexity of the Gaelic narrative tradition.

#### **QUESTIONS ABOUT STORYTELLING IN THE SCHOLARLY LITERATURE**

Much of the scholarly literature concerning the Gaelic tradition in general raises questions (whether explicitly or otherwise) about Gaelic storytelling and the Gaelic storyteller. From early accounts such as Martin Martin's description of the way in which Gaelic "orators" sought inspiration for their compositions by lying in darkened rooms with "a stone upon their belly, and plaids about their heads" (1994 [1698]: 177), scholars and commentators have been interested in the way in which storytellers, poets and other practitioners of the verbal arts learned, remembered and performed their material. Questions about the interplay between oral and literary elements have also occupied thinkers.

Those scholars specifically concerned with Gaelic storytelling have pursued such questions about learning and remembering stories in relation to modern storytellers.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>There is a large amount of scholarly literature relevant to Gaelic storytelling. Primary sources include J.F. Campbell 1872, 1890-93; Carmichael 1928-1971; MacInnes 1890; MacDougall 1891; J.G. Campbell 1891; and McKay 1940, 1960. Much unpublished primary material is also to be found in the John F. Campbell of Islay manuscript collection in the National Library of Scotland and in the field notebooks and diaries kept by collectors for the Irish Folklore Commission and the School of Scottish Studies. Works by twentieth century scholars particularly relevant to Gaelic storytelling include Delargy 1945; Murphy 1940, 1953, 1955a-b, 1961; Bruford 1965, 1969, 1978, 1983, 1987, 1994, 1996; D.A. MacDonald 1972, 1978, 1981, 1985, 1989, 1994; MacLellan 1961, 1962; and MacNeil 1987. Many useful articles on Gaelic storytellers are to be found in the pages of *Tocher*; cf. especially MacDonald 1971; Fleming 1976; Bruford and Headlee 1976; Bruford et. al. 1979; Bruford, McDermitt and Robertson 1986; McDermitt 1980; and Douglas 1992.

James Delargy most notably addressed these questions in his 1945 "The Gaelic Storyteller," in which he calls attention to the existence of both very conservative modes of storytelling as well as freer, more improvisational styles. On the conservative side, he tells of individuals who practised their stories for hours before telling them, presumably going over sections and details which they had committed to memory. He also recounts instances of storytellers who had phenomenal memories and who seemed to be able to reproduce stories almost exactly as they heard them, word for word. Comments of Delargy's such as "I myself have heard the tale of *Diarmuid agus Gráinne* recited almost word for word from [Standish Hayes O'Grady's 1855] edition ... from the beginning to p. 92, by Séan Ó Conaill, the Kerry story-teller" (201) strongly imply that at least some storytellers practised a very conservative art, using memorisation or something close to it rather than telling a more loosely remembered story.

Such references to "word for word" recitation are not uncommon in the literature, and have contributed to an impression that Gaelic storytellers have traditionally been very faithful to a remembered original. Maartje Draak, for example, refers to the "special aptitude" of Irish and Scottish storytellers for "prodigious feats of memory" (1957: 48) and D.A. Binchy states that storytellers of old could "repeat the stories word-perfect, without making the least slip -- or if they did make a slip, [were] at once corrected by the audience ...." (1961: 9).<sup>2</sup>

However, along with the mention of word perfect recitation, there are also references to less fixed storytelling styles. Delargy, again in his 1945 lecture, describes the Gaelic storyteller as "a conscious literary artist" (184), who strives to pass on his or her story "as it has been received, unaltered, *not in regard to language*, but in form and plot" (194, emphasis mine), thus suggesting that the storyteller's use of language was a matter of personal choice rather than memorised recitation. In addition, he makes comparisons between the medieval storyteller and the modern one which suggest that word for word recitation has not traditionally been the norm, saying:

... the story-teller of the eighth century as well as his successor, the Gaelic *sgéalaí* of to-day, depended upon mnemonics and memorised tale-synopses,

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<sup>2</sup>Many other writers have touched on the ethos of earlier storytellers and bards in more general discussions concerning the history of Gaelic narrative/literary tradition, including Flower 1947; Murphy 1940, 1953, 1955a-b, 1961; Dillon 1948; Carney 1955; Knott 1957; Binchy 1961; Greene 1961; Bergin 1970; Mac Cana 1974, 1977, 1980, 1987; and J.E. Caerwyn Williams 1992. See also Almqvist, Ó Catháin and Ó Healaí (eds.), 1987 for many relevant articles, and C.I. Maclean 1952, 1954 for details of individual storytelling styles.

which they expanded later when called upon, impressing on their narrative all the skill derived from long training and experience (207).

He goes on to compare past and present again to make a similar point, saying that "... [in medieval storytelling] the narrative itself had no fixed form, its development depending entirely on the skill of the individual story-teller. The same holds good for the modern folk-tale" (209). Thus Delargy describes both conservative, fixed modes of storytelling which border on memorisation, as well as more improvisational styles in which the story has "no fixed form". However, while his comments and anecdotes give us glimpses of different types of storytelling practice, he does not make clear the relationship between these different practices in Gaelic storytelling. There is, of course, the possibility that no one model has traditionally prevailed in Gaelic storytelling, and that there are as many different types of storytelling as there are storytellers; however, by raising the issues of conservatism, creativity, memorisation and improvisation in Gaelic storytelling, Delargy identifies a variability of storytelling behaviour which inevitably points to questions about the nature of the tradition.

Alan Bruford also addressed questions about the dynamics of Gaelic storytelling, alluding many times in Gaelic Folk-Tales and Mediaeval Romances (1969) to the ways in which stories and storytelling practices may have evolved and developed. He was particularly interested in the relationship between the literary manuscript tradition and the oral tradition, and devoted the last third of the work to a discussion of the effects of oral transmission on tales which may have originated in manuscript versions.<sup>3</sup> His discussion of the dynamics of storytelling includes such topics as the development of dialogue (167 ff.), the use of runs (182 ff.), the development of motifs, and the use of repetition as a narrative device in storytelling (210 ff.), and represents one of the most detailed studies of these features of Gaelic storytelling to date. His interest in the nature of Gaelic storytelling was also evident in his later work. In his 1978 article "Recitation or Re-creation? Examples from South Uist Storytelling," he directly addressed the question of how storytellers remember and tell stories. Noting Delargy's already quoted 1945 comment that tales had to be transmitted "unaltered, not in regard to language, but in form and plot" Bruford

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<sup>3</sup>Such issues of oral/literary interplay have been important to Celtic scholars; relevant discussions include Watson 1919; Ross 1959; Slotkin 1977-79; Ó Coileáin 1977 & 1978, 1981; Gillies 1981, 1982, 1986, 1996; Thomson 1983, 1987; McCaughey 1984; MacInnes 1987; Meek 1987; Ó Fiannachta 1987; Ó hÓgáin 1987, 1988; Bruford 1987; Mac Eoin 1989; Harrison 1989; Shaw 1989; and Gunderloch 1996.



boldly stated that "... some Scottish Gaelic storytellers have tried to pass on their tales unaltered in language as well as plot" (27). He went on to consider how some of this century's most prominent South Uist storytellers remembered and told stories, concluding that there is a case to be made for believing that the model of "... narrative wording improvised on a memorised framework, but much of the dialogue learned by heart -- was the most usual one for experienced storytellers in South Uist" (37). Here Bruford's relatively brief but penetrating and well documented discussion of the evidence recorded from a number of storytellers -- including a consideration of highly similar versions from the storytelling brothers Duncan and Neil MacDonald, as well as the examination of more than one version of the same story from the same storyteller -- drew attention to the significance of such issues for the field of storytelling scholarship, and pointed to the detailed examination of multiple recordings (or versions otherwise collected more than once) as one way forward for such investigation. Bruford's later 1987 article on "Memory, Performance and Structure in Traditional tales" drew attention to the crucial relationship between what he called "... the way in which the mind of the storyteller recalls and combines material" and the "basic structure of the tale" itself (106-107). Here he discussed a range of storytelling techniques, and concluded that our understanding of story structure could be greatly improved through a better understanding of how storytellers remember the components of a tale.

Other scholars have also raised specific questions about the nature of modern Gaelic storytelling. Kevin O' Nolan (1975, 1987) focuses on the function of traditional formulae in stories, while Kathleen Sheehan Lambert's (1985) interest is in the spoken and aural context of an Irish Gaelic storyteller. Barbara McDermitt's 1986 comparison of a Scottish and American storyteller devotes much attention to the learning, remembering and telling of stories, while Donald Archie MacDonald (1978, 1981) asks questions about the role of visual memory in storytelling.<sup>4</sup> While these scholars are interested in a number of aspects of Gaelic storytelling, they all ask questions about how storytellers learn, remember and tell stories. These questions -- still largely unanswered -- are at the heart of the study of storytelling, and inform the present work in its emphasis on such issues in relation to Brian Stewart and his stories.

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<sup>4</sup>As does Bruford; cf. especially Bruford and Todd 1996.

## THE USE OF SOUND RECORDINGS TO STUDY STORYTELLING

Responding to such questions about the nature of Gaelic storytelling, a number of scholars have suggested that our understanding could be advanced through the study of recordings of Gaelic storytellers. Scholars who have made explicit reference to such research include James Delargy (1945), James Ross (1959), and Seán Ó Coileáin (1977 & 1978). While scholars such as Maartje Draak (1957) and Alan Bruford (1978) have made limited use of multiple recordings to compare different versions of the same story from the same storyteller, no large scale studies of Gaelic storytelling have yet employed this method.

As early as 1945, James Delargy made specific reference to the role which sound recordings could play in the study of Gaelic stories:

By using the Ediphone recording machine in our work of collection we have been able to preserve traditional features of story-telling which are lost when tales are written slowly from dictation. It would be unwise to form conclusions about the style of Gaelic folk-tales based on an examination of much of what has been published hitherto (207).

In 1959, James Ross similarly drew attention to the possibility of studying sound recordings in order to improve our understanding of Gaelic storytelling. Writing in response to some of Milman Parry's ideas about the use and role of formulae in oral verse,<sup>5</sup> Ross raised the question of whether Gaelic storytellers have traditionally made use of spontaneous composition in their storytelling, and in so doing raised larger questions about the nature of Gaelic storytelling in general. In his argument for a better understanding of the Gaelic narrative tradition, he pointed to the study of sound recordings as a valuable method of inquiry into this question, saying:

... it is not certain that extemporizing played any fundamental part in the transmission of such tales. With the advent of the tape recorder, the comparative study of different tellings of the same tale from the same teller has been made possible (1959: 12).

Ross went on to say that for at least one storyteller who was recorded, Duncan MacDonald of South Uist, the stories were not impromptu creations but rather very precise versions of an already prepared story. Such a statement, coupled with Ross's call for a "comparative study of different tellings of the same tale from the same

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<sup>5</sup>Cf. A. Parry 1971.



teller," raises challenging questions about Gaelic storytelling and points to the study of multiple recordings of the same story from the same storyteller as a potentially fruitful area of research.

In the 1970s, Seán Ó Coileáin also called for the study of multiple recordings from the same storyteller. Responding to ideas made popular by Albert Lord (1960) and the subsequent proponents of "Oral Formulaic Theory"<sup>6</sup> he suggested in his article "Oral or Literary? Some Strands of the Argument" (1977 & 1978) that Gaelic storytelling is less "conservative" and more "formulaic" than has been believed to be the case. Arguing that prevailing ideas about Gaelic storytelling were based more on assumptions than on observations, he made the following statement:

Despite the amount of fieldwork carried out I know of no experiment to test the degree to which a storyteller reproduced a tale as narrated to him, or the variation which might occur in a tale as told by the same narrator on two or more occasions. (Such duplicate recordings as were made more or less by accident would repay further study in this regard). It was probably thought unnecessary to conduct such an experiment.... (12).

Here Ó Coileáin not only pointed again to the potential use of multiple recordings in storytelling scholarship, but made specific suggestions as to what kind of study the examination of such recordings might facilitate. In particular, he identified the important question of whether or not a storyteller always tells his or her stories in the same way at each telling, and suggested that multiple recordings could be used to help resolve such an issue. It is perhaps not surprising that although Seán Ó Coileáin and James Ross were coming from very different theoretical perspectives -- while Ross took issue with Milman Parry's early ideas about formulae, Ó Coileáin appears to have embraced such ideas -- they nevertheless both called for the same kind of careful investigation of multiple recordings, for they both saw the use of multiple recordings as a way to address fundamental issues about the nature of Gaelic storytelling.

It is worth noting that scholars of Gaelic narrative have not been alone in raising such questions about the nature of storytelling and in advocating the use of multiple sound recordings as a way to address some of these questions. In a 1986 article entitled "Folk-Narrative Performance and Tape Transcription, Theory Versus Practice," Herbert Halpert and J.D.A. Widdowson, referring to stories collected in

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<sup>6</sup>Cf. Foley, 1988, 1990.

Newfoundland, also raised the possibility of studying variation between recorded texts, concluding that although such a method is desirable and potentially very valuable, it has not often been used in published scholarship:

... when one seeks demonstrations of the fact that a tale lives in different performances by the same teller through the publication of more than one telling by even a single performer, the publishing record is indeed scant (42).

The authors go on to state that their own interest in such a study is prompted by the hope that, through the use of very accurately transcribed recordings -- stories transcribed "as literally and exactly as possible" (46) -- they will be able to "reflect oral storytelling styles with some accuracy...so as to reveal aspects of storytelling style not visible in more literary transcriptions" (46). Here they echo Delargy's belief that the study of sound recordings can be particularly valuable in better understanding storytelling features which are not otherwise apparent. Thus from both inside and outside the realm of Gaelic storytelling scholarship, scholars have identified the study of sound recordings -- and in particular, the study of multiply recorded stories from one storyteller -- as a means by which to better identify and understand features of storytelling. In Chapter Four of the present work, multiple sound recordings are indeed used in this way to investigate many aspects of Brian Stewart's storytelling, including the question of whether he tells his stories "the same way" each time.

#### **INFLUENCE FROM FOLKLORE STUDIES: STUDYING THE INDIVIDUAL**

In addition to questions about the nature of Gaelic storytelling which have been raised by those studying the tradition, ideas from the related field of folklore scholarship have also been influential in the study of Gaelic tradition and tradition bearers. An important influence from the field of folklore is the idea that the individual tradition bearer is of great importance to the study of traditional material and should be studied in detail, an approach which encourages the belief that the present study of one storyteller could make a valuable contribution to our understanding of the tradition. As early as 1946 Stith Thompson cited Russian folklorists such as Mark Asadowskij (1926) as being particularly interested in the study of individual storytellers (Thompson 1946: 451). More recently influential folklore scholars such as Alan Dundes (1980), Linda Dégh (1972, 1995), Juha Pentikäinen (1976, 1978, 1980) and Lauri Honko (1980) have repeatedly asserted that the individual tradition bearer should be at the centre of our studies and that, more importantly, we should directly question such tradition bearers about the

material we collect and record from them.<sup>7</sup> Alan Dundes, in his 1980 work Interpreting Folklore, summarises this viewpoint as follows:

Folklorists have erred in simply recording bare texts and assuming that they would undertake all the analysis (or literary criticism) that was needed. The informant's opinions about his materials are rarely solicited and yet they should be. Informants should be asked what they think the significance of their materials is (30-31).

This idea that informants should be at the centre of study has become widespread, as has belief in the importance of studying and supplying a tradition bearer's context, which Dundes defines as "the specific social situation" in which a story or other item of tradition is told (1980: 23). Indeed, the significance of context for folklore scholarship has become so accepted that in a 1980 article on "Current Trends in Folk Narrative Theory," Lauri Honko stated that "...the study of folklore in context cannot be copyrighted any more. The trend is world-wide" (33).

Closer to home, Gaelic scholars have also stressed the importance of the tradition bearer to the study of storytelling. In a paper given at the 1979 Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research, Donald Archie MacDonald of the School of Scottish Studies strongly supported the idea that storytellers and other tradition bearers should be consulted about their own art. His comments were as follows:

...it is crucially important to consult the storyteller, the singer, the informant, on all matters relating to his or her own art. After all, they know the material much better than we do. Frequently they are highly gifted and indeed very intelligent people, who have opinions about what they are doing and who have a right to be asked to express these opinions. It has, unfortunately, been all too common for folklorists to gather in the material and go on their way rejoicing -- and then construct splendid scholarly theories about the "folk" and how they operate, without ever thinking that the people themselves might have useful opinions to contribute on this subject. It has pleased me very much to hear numbers of voices raised at this Congress on topics of this kind and I do believe that there is an increasing awareness among the scholars that the informants too have an important role to play in contributing quite significantly to scholarship (1981: 124).

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<sup>7</sup>Additional informative discussion on the importance of the study of individual tradition bearers can be found in Kōngä 1976; Georges 1976; and Ó Catháin 1980-81.

Here MacDonald summarised the changing scholarly ethos of the period and anticipated some of the informant-orientated work on Gaelic tradition bearers which was to follow. Recent scholarship which has risen to MacDonald's challenge to "consult the storyteller...on all matters relating to his or her own art," includes Tales Until Dawn/Sgeul gu Latha published in 1987 by Joe Neil MacNeil and John Shaw, a collection of the former's stories and lore from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Subtitled "The World of a Cape Breton Gaelic Story-Teller," the book focuses on the storyteller's own experiences, including an autobiographical chapter on Joe Neil MacNeil's life story as well as a great deal of detailed information about the people from whom he learned his stories. Most of the book is in fact in the form of a first-person narrative recorded and transcribed from Joe Neil MacNeil himself. The stories are introduced and concluded with remarks from the storyteller, and the book is infused throughout with the storyteller's personality.

The informant-centred approach was also used effectively in the study of a Gaelic tradition bearer by Thomas A. McKean in his 1993 doctoral thesis on the life and songs of Iain MacNeacail, a Hebridean bard who composes Gaelic songs. Here McKean focuses on the bard himself, his development as a song-maker, and his relationship to his community. Saying that "[a] great deal has been done without consulting these essential players [tradition bearers] in the creative act ... almost wholly neglecting first-hand impressions of social function and the actual thought processes of the songs' composers" (201), McKean goes on to provide an impressively full and meticulous account of the life and song-making of Iain MacNeacail of Skye, a man with whom he worked closely and whom he questioned extensively about his life-long relationship to verse-making.

Other Scottish (non-Gaelic) tradition bearers have also been at the centre of research in recent decades. For example, in Barbara McDermitt's 1986 doctoral thesis comparing the Scottish storyteller Stanley Robertson with the American storyteller Ray Hicks, much attention is given to the comments and opinions of the storytellers themselves, as well as their individual storytelling techniques and their social and historical contexts. Similarly, Roger Leitch's 1988 study of Sandy Stewart, a Scots-speaking<sup>8</sup> traveller and colourful raconteur, focuses directly on Sandy Stewart himself, telling his life story in his own words through the use of transcribed interviews. In his introductory remarks, Leitch describes the book as "... an account

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<sup>8</sup>"Scots" refers to the Scots language, which is related to English.



of his life experience that is based on the spoken word" and says that it is " ... a personal document that is close to a life history, but is far from a definitive account of Sandy's life" (xi).

In fact, if one takes a long view, the study of oral narrative in both Scotland and Ireland has been notable for the attention given to tradition bearers and the strong stamp of individual personality which has been evident in many works, ranging from repertoire studies such as James Delargy's Leabhar Sheáin Í Chonaill (1977 [1948]) to autobiographical works such as Betsy Whyte's The Yellow on the Broom (1979), Duncan Williamson's The Horsie man (1994), and the many articles in *Tocher* sketching the biographies of various storytellers, singers and other tradition bearers. What distinguishes the more recent studies, however, has been a heightened awareness of the centrality of the tradition bearer to the study of the tradition, as well as the direct questioning of tradition bearers about aspects of their relationship to the tradition in order to investigate issues such as memory or creativity which were not as explicitly addressed in the past.

#### **INFLUENCE FROM THE STUDY OF ORAL LITERATURE**

In addition to the study of Gaelic narrative and folklore studies, another strand of scholarship which has important implications for the study of Gaelic storytelling is the interdisciplinary study of oral literature. The study of storytelling can benefit from some of the discussion taking place in this very broad field of inquiry, especially discussion about the nature of "traditional" and "oral" literatures. While a discussion of trends in the study of oral narrative could easily comprise a thesis in itself, it is worth stating that the influential work of Milman Parry, Albert Lord (1960) and those who have come after them such as John Miles Foley (1988, 1990), has demonstrated the value of scrutinising and analysing recorded texts from the oral/literary perspective in order to see what illuminating patterns might emerge, as well as refining awareness of the use and role of verbal formulae in traditional narrative. More recent scholars such as Ruth Finnegan (1988, 1992) and Joyce Coleman (1993) have also made important contributions by bringing a new subtlety of understanding to the discussion of oral literature. They argue that because oral narrative differs from culture to culture, each separate tradition is deserving of careful investigation in order to answer specific questions about the nature of that particular tradition. Finnegan concerns herself with the nature of oral composition, contending that orally composed literature may take many forms. Her argument that "oral composition" may take the form of "... composition-in-performance, prior composition transmitted

through repeated oral and written media, and prior-composition-through-practice followed by repetition" (1988: 177) makes it clear that both deliberate and more improvisational modes of composition may contribute to oral narrative, and that such a mixture of compositional techniques is in fact to be expected rather than puzzled over. It is helpful to view Gaelic storytelling from this wider perspective, as it allows us to accept that the tradition has grown out of a centuries-long exchange between written/literary and oral materials which cannot be explained by any simple paradigm. Instead of seeing the complexity of this written-oral interface as problematic, the wider oral narrative perspective offered by scholars such as Finnegan allows us to move beyond an oral versus written, "either/or" scenario, and to begin to ask questions about the nature of the interface between the oral and the literary in Gaelic narrative. Thus while some other modern oral traditions have not been influenced by a manuscript tradition, many of the features of Gaelic storytelling may in fact be traceable to such a tradition. This is why a scholar such as Alan Bruford could place so much importance on the medieval manuscript tradition in his discussion of the development of modern Gaelic storytelling practices, tracing, for example, the origins of a particular motif current in the oral tradition of the nineteenth or twentieth century back to an earlier manuscript original.<sup>9</sup> Scholars such as Finnegan point out that not only is this interplay between oral and written to be expected, but that it should be studied in greater detail in order to further our understanding of the relationship between different modes of composition. So it is that the intersecting perspectives of the study of oral literature and the study of Gaelic narrative can result in an improved clarity of thought for both these disciplines.<sup>10</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have considered that much of the scholarly discussion of Gaelic narrative and Gaelic storytelling raises questions about the nature of Gaelic storytelling, such as how storytellers have traditionally learned and remembered stories. We have also noted that several scholars have suggested that the study of multiply recorded stories from the same storyteller could help to address some of these questions. In addition, we have discussed the informant-centred approach as an important influence on the related fields of folklore and Gaelic storytelling

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<sup>9</sup>See for example 1969: 131, n. 20, in which Bruford suggests that the occurrence of a motif in modern versions of the *Cèadach* story may be due to the survival of a detail from an earlier manuscript.

<sup>10</sup>For additional useful discussions of aspects of orality and the oral/written interface see Chaytor 1945; Goody and Watt 1968; and Scheunemann 1996. Cf. footnote 3 above for relevant discussions specific to Gaelic narrative. Rosalind Thomas' 1992 discussion of literacy and orality in ancient Greece is also useful as an incisive discussion of the issues in relation to another tradition.

scholarship, and have considered that ideas which have arisen from the study of oral literature can bring new complexity and subtlety of thought to the study of Gaelic storytelling. The project which follows uses both the informant-centred approach and a comparison of multiply recorded stories from the same storyteller in order to study Brian Stewart and his storytelling. It is hoped that by combining the study of the storyteller's own beliefs about storytelling with an examination of the evidence provided by the stories themselves, we will be able to answer questions about how Mr. Stewart learns, remembers and tells stories and in so doing to contribute to an improved understanding of Gaelic storytelling in general.



*The North of Scotland.  
Reproduced from Keay and Keay 1994.*



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE STORYTELLER'S STORY

#### OVERVIEW

In this chapter we will discuss Brian Stewart's life story and family background, using material recorded from him wherever appropriate. Rather than providing a consecutive biography, the discussion highlights key junctures in Mr. Stewart's life, paying particular attention to the topics which he himself has emphasised in the course of interviews and discussion. Such topics include boyhood memories of the travelling life and of related activities such as horse-dealing, tinsmithing, piping and storytelling.<sup>1</sup>

#### FAMILY HISTORY AND EARLY LIFE

##### Birth and Naming

Brian Stewart was born to a family of Gaelic-speaking travellers on 20 February 1911 in *Ach a' Bhràigh* ("field of the brae"), near Altandhu on the road past Achiltibuie on the Coigeach headland in Wester Ross.<sup>2</sup> His given name was Alasdair, but he was nicknamed *Bràighean* (pronounced much as English "Brian" and meaning "little Brae") from the place-name *Ach a' Bhràigh*, a name which has stayed with him all his life. Brian's own words on this subject are as follows:

....I was born in Wester Ross, in Achiltibuie. That's where I was born. "Coigeach". That's the name of, "Coigeach" they call it: *a' chòig ach*.<sup>3</sup> I was born there.<sup>4</sup>

....I was born in Wester Ross, in a place called *Ach a' Bhràigh*, *Ach a' Bhràigh*. And then -- that's how I'm *Bràighean*. You know, when a young bairn is born, [if] he's come in, "This is our own *Bràighean*," and "*Bràighean*" stopped on me. And like it'll stay now on me.<sup>5</sup>

Brian's family were based in Sutherland, two miles east of the village of Lairg, in a grouping of three small houses which the family referred to as *Rhemarstaig*. Brian's

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<sup>1</sup>While the discussion deals with Brian's travelling background, it does not attempt to provide a full account or social history of the travelling Stewarts. For more information on this topic, see Neat 1996; McDermitt 1986: 68-94; Roger Leitch 1988: introduction; and Henderson 1981.

<sup>2</sup>Located at Latitude 58 degrees north, Longitude 5 degrees 25' west.

<sup>3</sup>*A' chòig ach*: "the five *achs*". A local explanation for the name "Coigeach" is based on the fact that there are five places with the element "*ach*" ("field") in their names on the Coigeach peninsula.

<sup>4</sup>14 April 1993, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>5</sup>16 April 1993, Tape 2 of 2.

mother and father stayed in one of the houses with their family, Brian's paternal grandmother Siùsie<sup>6</sup> stayed in another of the houses, and Brian's paternal uncle Ailidh (often referred to as Ailidh Dall, "Blind Alec") stayed in the third house with his daughter Màiri (nicknamed Micki). According to Brian, the name *Rhemarstaig* derives from the Gaelic *Ruith nam Mart* ("The Running of the Cows"):

....Rhemarstaig.... It's a Gaelic name.... *Ruith nam Mart*, *Ruith nam Mart*, you know what a "mart" is, a cow.... *Ruith nam Mart*, there was a, eh, running the cows.<sup>7</sup>

....That's how it got the name, they were running the cows there, *mart*. *Ruith nam Mart*, and then they got "*Rhemarstaig*".<sup>8</sup>

### **Family History: Paternal Side**

Both of Brian's parents were Gaelic-speaking travellers. His father, Seumas (James) Stewart was born in 1872 in Strathglass, the valley of the River Glass above Dingwall,<sup>9</sup> and died at Rhemarstaig on 22 August 1936 at the age of 64; he is buried in the cemetery at Lairg. Brian's father's father (his paternal grandfather) was also named Seumas Stewart, and according to Brian he was also born near Strathglass. In recent interviews, Brian has not been able to trace his paternal side further back than his grandfather; however, in a 1974 interview with Donald Archie MacDonald, he stated that his paternal great-grandfather was Alasdair Stewart, son of another Seumas Stewart, whom Brian named as the Stewart ancestor who first left Perthshire. In the following excerpt from the 1974 interview, Brian -- with some help from his wife, Ina Stewart -- tells what he knows of how his Stewart ancestors came to Sutherland from Perthshire:<sup>10</sup>

**B.S.:** ....Uill, 'se Seumas Stiùbhart dh'fhàg Peairt an uair sin 's thàinig e, thàinig e an àird rathad .... an Earraghaidheal sin 's. Shin agaibh, 's shìn iad, sgap iad sin, 's thàinig feadhainn a' sin 's tha feadhainn a' seo againn....

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<sup>6</sup> The spelling "Siùsie" represents Brian Stewart's pronunciation of his grandmother's name, a cross between Gaelic "Siùsaidh" and English "Susie".

<sup>7</sup> 30 March 1995, Tape 1 of 1.

<sup>8</sup> 14 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>9</sup> Brian has told me that his father was born "in Strathglass, above Dingwall." While I find no village of that name, the River Glass (Latitude 58 degrees 43' north, Longitude 4 degrees 30' west) flows north of Dingwall, running from Loch Glass (which is to the north of Ben Wyvis) eastward to the Cromarty Firth. The word "Strath" comes from the Gaelic for "river valley" or "plain" and it is most likely that Brian is referring to the area near the River Glass, to the west of Evanton. Perhaps the family were travelling at the time of Brian's father's birth. There *is* another Strathglass, but it is further to the south and it does not seem likely to be the area to which Brian was referring; cf. Maclean 1990: 181.

<sup>10</sup> In the following exchange, the initials "D.A.M." stand for "Donald Archie MacDonald".

Sin am fear a thàinig á Peairt. 'S bha aid nisd ann an Earraghàidheal.

**D.A.M.:** Seadh.

**B.S.:** 'S thog e teaghlaichean an Earraghàidheal.

**D.A.M.:** Seadh.

**B.S.:** 'S cha chreid mi nach eil feadhainn diubh ann a' sin fhathastaich, ann a', an Earraghàidheal, ach chan fhac' mis' gin dhiubh riamh....

O nis, chan eil cuimhn' agam-as dè bh'air mo shinn seanair.

**Ina Stewart:** Alasdair.

**B.S.:** Tha mi 'creidsinn gur h-e, 'se, Alasdair. Alasdair. Alasdair bh'air mo shinn seanair. Shin agai' seanair m'athar, ma tha....

**DAM:** Agus sin mac dhan an fhear a thàinig á Peairt?

**BS:** Uill, 'se, 'se, tha mi 'creidsinn gur h-e, Peairt, 'n fheadhainn thàinig á Peairt. 'S nis thàinig mo sheanmhair -- phòs is', eh, aon de na Stiùbhartaich, 's thàinig is' null Chataibh leoth'. 'S shin agai', dh'fhuirich is' ann an Cataibh.... Ach 'se a's an Earraghaidheal rug' i 's, chaidh h-àrachdainn.

*[...Well, it was Seamas Stewart who left Perth then and he came, he came up in the direction ... in Argyll there and. There you have it, and they started, they scattered then, and some [of us] came there and there are some of us here....*

*That's the man who came from Perth. And now they were in Argyll.*

**D.A.M.:** Right.

**B.S.:** And he raised family in Argyll.

**D.A.M.:** Right.

**B.S.:** And I believe that some of them are there still, in, in Argyll, but I never saw one of them....

*Oh now, I can't remember what my great grandfather was called.*

**Ina Stewart:** Alasdair.

**B.S.:** I believe it was, yes, Alasdair. Alasdair. My great grandfather was called Alasdair. There you have my father's grandfather, then....

**D.A.M.:** And he was a son to the man who came from Perth?

**B.S.:** Well, yes, yes, I believe he was, Perth, the ones who came from Perth. And now, my grandmother came -- she married, eh, one of the Stewarts, and she came over to Sutherland with them. And there you have it, she stayed in Sutherland.... But it's in Argyll that she was born and, she was raised.

Here Brian explains how the Stewarts left Perth and made their way to Sutherland via Argyll. If we allow for thirty years between generations, we can guess that his great grandfather Seamas Stewart may have been born c. 1790, and perhaps left Perthshire between 1810 and 1820. Brian also mentions his paternal grandmother, Siùsie Stewart, who was born in Argyll in 1846. While it is not entirely clear where Siùsie spent her youth, she later married Brian's paternal grandfather and they raised their family in Sutherland. Siùsie lived at Rhemarstaig while Brian was growing up, and she died there on 25 January 1937 at the age of 91; she too is buried in Lairg. Siùsie

was, in Brian's own words, a "half Stewart": her mother was Jean MacArthur, from Argyllshire, and her father was James Stewart from Struan in Perthshire.<sup>11</sup> Thus Siùsie was a Stewart both by birth and by marriage.

It was from Siùsie that Brian learned all of the stories in his repertoire, which means that the stories discussed in this thesis have an Argyllshire and Perthshire dimension in their history. As Siùsie would have been fourteen years old at the time that Campbell of Islay first published his collection of Gaelic tales (J.F. Campbell: 1890-93) -- a time when storytelling was still active in the Highlands and Islands -- we can speculate that Siùsie would have been exposed to a storytelling tradition which was still flourishing in her youth. Indeed her own grandparents were probably born at the end of the eighteenth century, and Siùsie may well have heard stories and storytellers who learned their stories towards the end of the seventeen-hundreds. As Siùsie was Brian's main storytelling mentor -- he always cites her as his primary source of stories -- we have in Brian's stories and storytelling a living link to the traditions of the nineteenth century and earlier.

Siùsie had four sons: Seumas (Brian's father), Dòmhnall (Donald), Aonghas (Angus) and Alasdair (the already mentioned Ailidh Dall). Brian was acquainted with all of these uncles as he was growing up, and he heard stories from Ailidh as well as from his grandmother. It has already been noted that Ailidh has been described as "the best Gaelic storyteller ever recorded on the mainland of Scotland,"<sup>12</sup> so we can only speculate as to Siùsie's storytelling skills.<sup>13</sup> From Brian's comments it would seem that Siùsie was the master storyteller in the family, which means that from an early age, Brian was exposed to not one but two exceptionally gifted storytellers. Ailidh was also well known as a piper, and it was mainly from him that Brian learned to play the pipes. Brian also heard stories from his own father, and when he was an adult he told stories with his uncle Dòmhnall, as will be discussed in Chapter Three. Siùsie also had three daughters: Sìne (Jean), Màiri (Mary) and Grèasag (Gracie).

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<sup>11</sup>In a 1957 interview, Brian's paternal uncle, Ailidh Dall refers to Siùsie's father as "Jimmy Stewart of Struan." School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1957/37/1.

<sup>12</sup>Quoted by Henderson in Neat 1996: 71.

<sup>13</sup>Interestingly, *Ailidh Dall* cites both his mother and her brother, "old Jock Stewart" as sources for his stories (School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1955/74); thus we know that one of Siùsie's siblings was also a storyteller. Also very important in tracing the transmission of Stewart stories is the fact that Siùsie's sister Clementina ("Cleimidh") Stewart was the grandmother of another gifted storyteller, Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord. Alexander Stewart has said that he got his stories from Cleimidh; therefore the siblings Siùsie, Jock and Cleimidh were all storytellers who passed their stories down to younger generations.



Brian did not see these aunts much while growing up, as they had married and settled elsewhere with their families.

### **Family History: Maternal Side**

Brian's mother also came from a Gaelic travelling background. Her name was Anna (Anne) Williamson and she was born in Dunvegan on the Isle of Skye in 1875. She died on the first of November 1959 at the age of 84. She was first married to a MacDonald before her second marriage to Brian's father. Anna's mother was Kirsty, also from Skye, and her father was Alasdair Williamson, a traveller from "somewhere between Invergordon and Inverness."<sup>14</sup> Brian's mother had three brothers, Dòmhnall (Donald), Mùis (Moses) and Eòghan (Ewan), and two sisters, Màiri (Mary) and Ailig (Alec), sometimes called Ali. Brian is not as well acquainted with his mother's family as he is with his father's, but he believes that some of them still live in Skye, and that they too had stories.

### **Siblings**

Brian was the fifth of seven children born to his parents. He had three older sisters, Siùsie, Kirsty and Siohan (Johan),<sup>15</sup> none of whom are now living,<sup>16</sup> and a younger brother Peter who passed away in the early nineteen-nineties. His younger sister Mary lives in Alness. The eldest child was Brian's brother Angus, who was killed in the First World War. One of Brian's earliest memories is of this oldest brother:

.... Angus was killed in the nineteen-fourteen war.... I was only about four years old, only about four years old when I saw Angus.... I remember he took me away by the hand, down to a shop. And he bought sweeties for the girls, and he gave me some sweeties. And I ate them and, of course, I was wanting more of them. "Och, no," he says, "I'll wait and keep this for the girls now," he says. "You got your share," he says, "I'm keeping this for the girls." And when he wouldn't give me the sweetie, I took off, away, and, I remember, he was coming after me, and I looked back, and I could see his bare knees, you know in the kilt. The kilt was out behind him, and his bare knees coming, and he got me in his two arms, like this.... [*B.S. laughs.*]<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>13 May 1994, Tape 1 of 2.

<sup>15</sup>It was Siohan who remained unmarried and stayed with her parents to look after them in their old age; her adopted son Gordon is featured in Neat 1996.

<sup>16</sup>According to Brian, they are all buried in the cemetery in Lairg, although I was only able to locate Siohan's grave; she died on the first of April 1972.

<sup>17</sup>30 March 1995, Tape 1 of 1.



### Memories of Grandmother Siùsie

Many of Brian's earliest memories concern his grandmother Siùsie, who died in 1937. He remembers her as wearing a white woollen mutch tied under her chin, a long skirt and "good leather shoes".<sup>18</sup> She had grey hair and was stout, and her longest stories lasted for about an hour. He used to go to see her after supper and beg her to tell him stories until it was time to go to bed:

....Because her house was not, where she lived wasn't very far away from where I lived in, as a boy. And I would be, after supper every night I was down at my granny's. And I would be there 'til bedtime.<sup>19</sup>

Brian often talks about such night-time visits to his grandmother's house to hear stories. On another occasion he provided some more details:

....I was always with my granny, you know, when I was a li-- a boy.... I'd be always to, in the house with her and, at night and, especially at night and, when my, Ailidh Dall would be playing the bagpipes, then I was very interested in the bagpipes.... I'd be down in Siù-- and then, when I came down, "Oh, come on, Granny, 'til you give us a story now.".... And then she was starting to tell the story and, och I would be very interested in the story and, I picked them all up, you know.

....Ah well, I know my granny and uncle, Ailidh Dall, I would be down mostly every night in the year, in their house.... mostly every night I would be there, down there, as soon as I would get my supper, I would be away down, I would be there 'til bedtime.... And then I would, I would leave them, and, if the night was dark, I was a little boy.... frightened in the dark, Ailidh would come out to the door, and he would be shouting to me, "*Do ruig thu? Do ruig thu? Do ruig thu?*" ["Have you arrived? Have you arrived? Have you arrived?"] ....Until I was at my own door, you know.<sup>20</sup>

As Brian visited his grandmother "mostly every night," he has many memories of this happy time. In a 1974 interview, he again discussed hearing stories from his grandmother, this time making the point that storytelling was an important form of entertainment in the days before radio and television:

....Dar bha mi 'na mo ghiollan bheag, 's dar a char sin inns' dhomh, chum mi riamh 'nam chuimhn' aid, dòigh air choreigin. Uill, chual' mi uair no dhà aid cheana aig, eh, uill, lathaich' a bha sin cha robh telebhisean ann, 's cha robh --

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<sup>18</sup>From an unrecorded interview of 1 July 1994.

<sup>19</sup>14 April 93, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>20</sup>30 October 1993, Tape 1 of 1.

dar a bha mis' 'na mo ghiollan, cha robh, cha robh, eh, *wireless* ann, no *transistor*, dad dhe, dhen seòrs'....

Ach, eh, bha *gramophone* ann, cha chreid mi, bha *gramophone* againn. 'S nis, le caith' na h-oidhche, bhithinn 'dol, cho luath 's a dh'ithinn mo shuipair, bhithinn 'dol bhàn taigh mo sheanmhar. Agus, eh, bhiodh i staigh .... theirinn rith', "O, innsibh stòiridh dhomh-as." Uairean, bhiodh i 'g ràdh rium, "Och, chan urra dhomh [...] stòiridh inns'" -- cha bhiodh i, cha bhiodh i ann an *cut* .... 's oidhchean' eil' bhiodh i, 's dh'innseadh i rudeigin dhomh dhen a' sin. Shin agai', ma tha.<sup>21</sup>

*[When I was a little boy, and when that [i.e., stories] was told to me, I always kept them in my memory, some way or another. Well, I heard them once or twice before from, eh, well, in those days there wasn't television, and there wasn't -- when I was a lad, there wasn't, there wasn't, eh, the wireless, or transistor, anything of, of the sort....*

*But, eh, there was the gramophone, I believe, we had a gramophone. And now, to pass the night, I would go, as soon as I'd eat my supper, I would go down to my grandmother's house. And, eh, she would be in .... I would say to her, "Oh, tell me a story." Sometimes, she would say to me, "Och, I cannot [...] tell a story" -- she wouldn't be, she wouldn't be in form .... and other nights she would be, and she would tell me something of that. There you go, then.]*

## TRAVELLING LIFE

### Tents and Carts

As a boy Brian travelled with his family in the summers, staying in tents and trading in horses, tin and other goods with the settled crofting communities. Brian has described the travelling life in great detail, and it is clear that he remembers these years as happy ones.

.... You see in my young days, I mean, we used to travel from place to place. And eh, we used to be, eh, mingling among the crofters and that, making deals with them with bowlies and horses and things like that. That's what we made a living of .... ponies, sell-- buying and selling them....<sup>22</sup>

Brian describes the tents the family stayed in as bough tents which were approximately five feet in height, ten or twelve feet long, and nine feet wide. The tents were waterproof and were comfortable and warm, and Brian would have spent a good part of every year living in them. Here he provides some details about their structure and furnishings:

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<sup>21</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/27/A-B1.

<sup>22</sup>14 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2.

.... We travelled from place to place.... [W]e lived in tents.... [T]hey were bough, bough tents, and.... They were quite comfortable, aye, quite warm.

**C.Z.:** What was the material of the tent itself?

**B.S.:** It was, we, we used to get it from Aberdeen, it was ... green cotton. But it was some stuff on it that was waterproof.... When it was pouring rain, you were going to scratch a match to the inside of it, it was that dry. It was never wet in the inside.

**C.Z.:** How tall was it, how high was it inside the tent?

**B.S.:** Oh, it'd be ... over five feet in height. And ... ten or twelve feet long.... It was nine feet wide....

Well in places we'd have two tents, you know. One for the parents and one for the children, you know....<sup>23</sup>

.... there was two poles [you can just] shove it up, and, and then there was corner poles that stretched it out. A lovely tent, it was. You could scratch a match [in the] pouring rain, you could scratch a match to the inside of the cover. It was that dry. We bought it from my, well my dad took it from the Aberdeen Coal and Salt and Tannin[g] Company, Aberdeen....

[T]here'd be about three of us there, three or four of us there.... Because there's a, a curtain, you know, [drawn], it'd make a division in it....

**C.Z.:** Did you have mattresses which you brought with you as well?

**B.S.:** Yes.... Mattresses, pillows and everything.... Oh yes, we were comfortable.

.... Well, when I were in Durness once .... a sheep farmer came in. And he threw himself back on the bed, on my bed, and he looked up. Well he says, "I never thought," he said, "that you were so comfortable here."

I says, "What do you think," I says, "I would be?" I says, "I want my comfort the same as anybody else," I says. "I like to be comfortable and warm," I said. "Oh," he says, "anybody could do here," he says.

**C.Z.:** What did you use for heat, did you have a fire, or did you have a gas -- what did you -- ?

**B.S.:** A gas ring.

[*Here B.S. goes on to describe how smoke from a live fire funnelled out of the tent:*]

....No, the tent, there was a, a steel ring with a hole in it, and it was attached to the cover. So that nothing would burn, you know, when it heated. And the funnel was going up through this hole, with just a piece of metal, metal and a hole cut in it. Then there was rivets and joining the cover through the edges of it, right around.<sup>24</sup>

Brian explains that they also slept in the carts at times:

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<sup>23</sup>14 April 1993, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>24</sup>30 October 1993, Tape 1 of 1.

**B.S.:** .... Oh, I would be about fifteen, sixteen. And then I would come in and, I would go to bed and get my head in the pillow and, with the fresh air, you'd just go away like, no time at all, away to sleep.

**C.Z.:** And what did you sleep on?

**B.S.:** On a mattress.

**C.Z.:** So you'd have that all in the cart when you were travelling?

**B.S.:** In the cart. Because you could put the mattress just lying on the bottom of the cart. It would just, it was a, it was ... four feet wide, the cart [...] and it was like a box affair, there were sides on it, closed sides on it, and it was about nine feet, nine or ten feet long....

**C.Z.:** ....What kept the rain out? What would be on top of the cart?

**B.S.:** Oh just a green-proofed cover. It wouldn't let no damp or rain in.

**C.Z.:** And would it be on boughs or anything?

**B.S.:** Aye, that's the tent, like, it would be on the boughs.... The boughs would be on the cart, but not like that. They would be on it tied in a bunch together. And they were, you would just fit them on the side of the cart and, in kind of a circle.

**C.Z.:** And .... did you get up very early in the morning then?

**B.S.:** Not very early, no. Because you'd get a great sleep in the tent, you know, the fresh air and that. You could sleep on.

**C.Z.:** Was it not cold?

**B.S.:** No, no. Sometimes you'd only be too warm in it.<sup>25</sup>

### **Routes of Travel**

As was typical of travelling families, Brian's family traded horses, tin and other goods with the crofting communities through which they travelled. Brian has said that they visited the same places each year, although it is unclear from his comments as to whether they followed a set route. They usually started out travelling northwest from Lairg along the road which led to Rosehall, then Oykel Bridge and up towards Lochinver. From the number of references which Brian makes to Achiltibuie and Polbain, it is clear that the Coigeach headland was often included in their itinerary, as was the Lochinver area, Stoer, Culkein, Clashnessie, Badcall and Scourie. They also travelled along the north coast, often stopping by Bettyhill.<sup>26</sup> In truth, Brian seems to be well acquainted with the entire area of Sutherland and Caithness, which is not surprising considering his many years of travelling. He even wrote a song, "The Waters of Kylesku," which mentions many of the places which he and his family

<sup>25</sup>15 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2. For additional information about the Sutherland travellers' tents and campsites, see Neat 1996: 229-30.

<sup>26</sup>According to Neat (1996: 229-30), the Stewarts followed three set routes, one of which was "West on the A837 up Glen Oykel to Ledmore and along the north side of Loch Assynt, where they either turned north to cross the Kylescu Ferry, or continued west to Lochinver, Polbain and Achiltibuie." Neat claims that these routes "follow ancient tracks....first developed in the Neolithic period."



visited on their travels. While the song is now known to many in Scotland, especially in Sutherland, few people know that Brian had a hand in writing it. He and his neighbour, Davey Henderson, wrote it together in the late 1940s, when Brian had returned from the war and settled in Culrain. It was Brian's wife Ina who put the tune to it. As well as giving a good indication of the scope of Brian's travels, the song expresses Brian's deep acquaintance with, and love for, the landscape of his youth. "The Waters of Kylesku," as recited to me by Brian, is as follows:

By Klibrek and by Loyal, to the bonnie Kyle of Tongue,  
That road we often travelled in the days when we were young.  
There's magic and there's beauty, in those hills we're passing through,  
There's many a mile from Lairg to the waters of Kylesku.

Of all of bonnie Scotland, I dearly love the West,  
Its bens and glens in summertime surely are the best.  
For grandeur and for beauty, the rugged mountain dew --  
There's many a mile from Durness to the waters of Kylesku.

By Craigie Pool and Loyal to the Coldbackie Sands,  
I thought of them when soldiering in far and foreign lands.  
I dreamt I saw the sunset on the hills of Casheldhu,  
In fancy I was wandering by the waters of Kylesku.

There's beautiful Achfary, on the shores of Loch More,  
Where the winter waves are breaking like the seas on Skerryvore.  
By Laxford and Rhiconich, to the bonnie caves of Smoo.  
There's many a mile from Durness to the waters of Kylesku.

By Ledmore and Loch Assynt, from Lochinver round to Stoer  
You can view the wild Atlantic from its wild and rocky shore.  
The clear and sparkling rivers, where the salmon are not few  
There's many a mile from Oykel to the waters of Kylesku.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>These verses have been conflated from recordings of 31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2, and 1 April 1995, Tape 2 of 2. The last verse was taken from a private handwritten version of the song, written out by the late Colin MacLeod, a resident of Sutherland who enjoyed the song. I am grateful to Mrs. Shiona Mackay for providing a copy of Colin MacLeod's version. Apparently the song has taken on a life of its own in oral tradition, and I have been told by Mrs. Mackay that it is not uncommon for individuals to add their own verses to it



### Relationship with the Settled Community

One of the aspects of travelling which Brian enjoyed was the variety of people and locations which he met along the way. According to Brian, his family had a good relationship with the local people, and they looked forward to seeing many acquaintances and friends during their travels each year.

**B.S.:** .... Oh, it's lovely, I'm telling you that. You would enjoy it, I know you would. Because you see different locations, different day, you meet different people, every day, and you got to know people, you know. And got acquainted with them. You was getting fresh, different air each day, and, I wish to God I was still travelling.

**C.Z.:** Every year, would you travel in the same way? The same places?

**B.S.:** Aye, same way, yes. Because, I got acquainted to a lot of people up there, you know, and they were very good to me. They got to know me, and they were very kind to me....<sup>28</sup>

.... When I got the first horse, my Dad was there then, I was about three years old. And, he would be walking beside me, and he would have a hold on my leg, in case I would fall off....

Oh well, we'd stop and, sometimes we'd be a week in, sometimes two or three days at the one place, then we'd move on to the next.... [W]e went in Sutherland and Caithness.

**C.Z.:** Always the same places, would you always stay in the same places?

**B.S.:** Yes, more or less.

**C.Z.:** And you knew all the people around?

**B.S.:** Oh I know all the people. And you see, they're all small crofts, and everyone that's, they would be, some would be wanting a younger horse. The ones would be getting old, and they'd be wanting to get, exchange them for a young one. And others, maybe, they'd be wanting a bigger one or a smaller one. We did a lot of deals with them back and forward like that, you know.

**CZ.:** ....And did you do anything else? You had horses, and you had tin, were there other things as well?

**B.S.:** Oh, yes, sometimes they had drapery, you know. Dungarees, and shirts and, this and, pullovers and, all sorts of things. You would just call it a travelling salesman....<sup>29</sup>

Brian often remembers crofting folk he knew well, some of whom were close friends. He tells one anecdote about coming home from the war and meeting a crofter he knew in the Lochinver area:

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<sup>28</sup>15 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2.

<sup>29</sup>15 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2.

.... Oh well, I was very acquainted in the Lochinver direction. I think all the dogs know me there. I'm very acquainted there. Because when I went there the first time after I came back home to the army, in forty-six, there was a chappie there, MacDonald. No, MacKay. It's all mostly all MacKays out there. MacKay, Neil, Neilie MacKay the Clachan. He came out and I had a lovely animal on the [...] a lovely mare, a [...] dark brown mare. And he threw his arms around my neck, "Oh, Brian," he says, "I thought I was never going to see you again." He thought, you see, that I might get killed or something like that happened to me. "Och," I said, "nothing happened to me. I'm too wicked!"<sup>30</sup>

Brian then goes on to describe his trading relationship with the crofters when he was an adult:

**C.Z.:** Which other places would you go from Bettyhill, where else, where else would you go?

**B.S.:** Armadale, Armadale, (*sic*) Tongue, Durness, Scourie. Kylesku. All up there....

**C.Z.:** And would you be bringing horses with you, or anything to trade?

**B.S.:** Yes, we brought the horses with us. And all the crofters up there knew me, and then if they were wanting a pony they came to me. Because they knew that I was honest and I wouldn't give them nothing but what was genuine, or would I do them in any way....

**C.Z.:** Were you trading anything else at the time, were you selling anything, or -- I know you said you used to have tin.

**B.S.:** I was selling tin work, tin, tin. I used to do the tin work myself. Buckets and ... for carrying water, you know, and milking buckets and ... eh ... milk cans.

**C.Z.:** Right. And was it just you and your wife? Was it just you and your wife?

**B.S.:** Me and my wife, yes....<sup>31</sup>

### **Tinsmithing**

Brian has explained that he learned tinsmithing from his father and that he practised this craft as an adult. In the following comments he describes some of the items he used to make and where he got the raw materials:

**B.S.:** Oh I used to do, work with my own two hands, too. Tin work .... I used to do buckets, and basins, and, eh.... Doing the buckets, you know, for, ferrying milking buckets, with lids on them, and. Do you know, they used to

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<sup>30</sup>30 October 1993, Tape 1 of 1.

<sup>31</sup>30 October 1993, Tape 1 of 1.

milk cows, the old buckets for milking cows, and buckets for ferrying water....

My father, he used to do it, you see, and I learned a lot of him, as well. Because I would be a wee boy, and I was watching him and I was quite interested in it, you know. I just started myself, then. It was great for the tourists, they would buy in the lot, you know.... Aye. And we made big pans for long handles in them.... And sieves for, you know for, sieves for skimming milk or anything that they wanted.... Making funnels for putting petrol in your car, you know, and anything like that.... Or in a tractor.

**C.Z.:** So did you have all your own equipment?....

**B.S.:** Yes. I had all my own equipment, yes....<sup>32</sup>

.... I think I was among the horses when I was eight years old. And I've been among them all my life. That's what I would make my living off. I bought and sold them. And I did tin work.... You know, I was a tinsmith. I could make sieves, funnels, and milk-cans, and. All the things that you use in the house, you know.

**C.Z.:** Where did you get the raw material?

**B.S.:** We, we got it, we were buying it from an iron-monger's, it come from, well there's a tin mine in Cornwall. But, I don't know, I think it's, getting very scarce now, that, very expensive to get. We used to get the tin in, in Tain. In the iron-monger's in Tain, we would take it home and, [in bulk, you know]. And we would buy, maybe, a hundred-weight of it. A hundred-weight of sheet tin. And then ... the crofters and the ... the lady crofters in the west would be buying that for milking, tins and milking buckets, you know and, milking cows, they were, not many people milking cows now, it's all [...] tin work. But at that time they milked the cows, their own cows then. They made butter and crowdie out of it. And basins for keeping that milk, 'til the cream would come on it, then they would skim it, the cream off, make butter of it, they would. Och, we made, I made all that, you know.<sup>33</sup>

### **Piping**

Brian also describes some of the entertainment which he and his family provided for themselves. One of these was piping. He explains here how he learned to play, saying that his family was musical and this musical ability "just seems to come in me":

**C.Z.:** How old were you when you learned to play the pipes?

**B.S.:** Oh, just I learnt myself.

**C.Z.:** Did you?

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<sup>32</sup>14 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2.

<sup>33</sup>14 May 1994, Tape 1 of 1.

**B.S.:** Aye. Well, all my ancestors, they were musical. And, it just seems to be come in me, too, I just, just took an awful notion for the piping, you know and, playing the chanter and, I got at it and, I took myself [on] then.

**C.Z.:** How old were you?

**B.S.:** About fourteen.

**C.Z.:** So where did you get them?

**B.S.:** We got them from Glasgow.... [W]e bought them. From 24 Renfrew Street, Glasgow.

**C.Z.:** Right. How much did they cost you?

**B.S.:** A hundred pound.... Oh, they were a beautiful set of pipes.

**C.Z.:** Did anyone else in your family play the pipes at that time?

**B.S.:** Yes.... My uncle, Ailidh Dall, he, oh, he was great at it, he was sweet at playing the pipes.... I learnt from him, and he learned from his own uncle.... He was Peter.<sup>34</sup> I think, as far as I could tell you, he was one of the greatest piper in his day....<sup>35</sup>

### **Storytelling Outside the Immediate Family**

Storytelling was another important form of entertainment. When Brian's family travelled in the summer they often met other travelling families, and sometimes travelled together for a while. During this time the families camped together, and at night they often entertained themselves with stories, music and singing. In Brian's own words:

Then we'll be sitting down at the fire and telling the stories, you know....When we'd be travelling we might meet them [other relatives or families]. Probably they would be ... joint families for a week together, going round the country, and then split up again, and each one went their own way then.<sup>36</sup>

Brian also tells of an instance in which the family told stories with a man from the settled crofting population, a man he has mentioned to me more than once:

**C.Z.:** What other, what other people did you know who had stories besides for your uncle and your grandmother?

**B.S.:** Well, I think I said to you but I don't know his name, though. There was a man in Achiltibuie, and he would tell stories.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm. And were those stories the same ones that your grandmother had or different ones?

**B.S.:** Aye, sometimes the same, but he, he had different stories. But I forget his name though, he's, he was in Polbain. That was the name of the place.

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<sup>34</sup>According to Brian, this was his paternal grandfather's brother.

<sup>35</sup>15 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2.

<sup>36</sup>30 October 1993, Tape 1 of 1.

Because I remember my father telling me, "Go and get him," he says, "come in to the tent, and tell stories." And he did. I don't remember his name. I know he lived in Polbain in a little housie in Polbain, in Achiltibuie.<sup>37</sup>

## **ADULTHOOD**

### **Early Adulthood and Marriage**

As a teenager and young adult in Lairg, Brian did farm work for a local family for a number of years, and also did some quarrying work. At this time he continued to have close ties with his family and their traditional activities of horse-trading, tinsmithing, and summer travelling. He was a well-built, handsome man with auburn hair, and was very strong and physically able.

In 1938, Brian married Alexandrina (known as "Ina") Williamson, who was one of the Gaelic-speaking travelling Williamsons based in nearby Edderton. Brian had known her for many years, as her family was related to his own and sometimes the two families would have travelled together briefly in the summer. Mrs. Stewart was a good Gaelic singer, and Brian often reminisces about how they would go travelling on their summer holidays and sing by the fireside. Here Brian describes his wife and his memories of happy times with her:

.... [S]he was a lovely singer. She was a lovely Gaelic, or English, singer. I wish I could sing like that. She had a lovely voice....

She had long, fair hair on her. Or, or, or maybe blond hair. And she used to make it in pleats, and wind it round her ears like this, and then put a hairpin in it, to keep it together. But she was a lovely singer. I remember it, me and her would sing together, you know, aside the fire.<sup>38</sup>

And again:

.... Because me and my wife, late wife, used to sing, just at the fireside, the two of us together, you know, singing together, but she was a good singer, but I was, my voice was always rough, but she had a lovely voice....<sup>39</sup>

### **Army Service and Working for the Forestry Commission**

Shortly after marrying, Brian entered the army. He served in the 67th Division of the Royal Artillery during the Second World War, based first in training camps in

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<sup>37</sup>31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>38</sup>31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>39</sup>14 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2.



England (mainly Nottingham) and then in Burma. He was in the army for six years, and when he returned from the War, he and his wife bought their house, "The Bungalow," in Culrain, a small village not far south of Lairg, where they lived from 1946 onwards, and where they raised a daughter, Jeanann.

While in Culrain, Brian worked for the Forestry Commission for twenty years until he retired at the age of sixty-five. He describes the way he first started working for them as follows:

Well, the Forester came to the house, and I had a, an horse, a big Clydesdale. And he said to me, would I go over to the wood and start dragging trees out with a horse. I said yes, I will, and that's where it started, I started with a horse in the wood and, dragging the trees out with him.

And, I said, "How much I'm going to get for dragging these trees out? I have to feed my horse," I says then, "I have to keep her in good trim."

"Oh," he says, "ten pence a tree."

"Och well," I says, "I'll try it, but it doesn't sound very big," I says, "for a tree."

But I went for the ten pence and, I worked with the horsie and, I did all right with it. I was paying eight pound a month for the horse's stable alone, and then I had his hay and his oats to get as well. But I made ends meet and I carried on. And then, when the, when I was finished, finished dragging the trees out, he put me onto the squad just planting trees....<sup>40</sup>

On another occasion, Brian again described his work for the Forestry Commission:

Oh well, we did hand draining, you know, and planting, planting plants, planting. And sowing manure, fertiliser. And cutting grass, and cutting brackens and. Cutting wood down, cutting the trees down....<sup>41</sup>

### **Retirement and Later Life**

While Brian was working for the Forestry Commission, he and his wife no longer travelled, except for summer holidays during which they often spent a few weeks driving and camping along the same routes they had travelled in their youth. Brian also continued to keep and deal a few horses at this time as well as after his retirement, and he also kept some cattle and sheep. In 1985 Brian suffered a stroke which left his left side partially paralysed. He could no longer use his left arm, and his walking was much impaired. His mental abilities were left intact, but his physical

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<sup>40</sup>14 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2.

<sup>41</sup>30 October 1993, 1 of 1.

abilities were weakened, a difficult state for someone who had been active and fit all his life. In 1991 Mrs. Stewart passed away, after fifty-three happy years of marriage; the loss still weighs heavily on Brian today. Since that time, Brian has lived in nursing homes, first in Invergordon and now in Dornoch. Although he misses his own home very much, Brian maintains a permanent good humour, and is always welcoming and friendly to the visitors and students who come to hear stories. He is always willing to discuss the old days, to tell a story or sing a song, and at the age of 84 he once told me that he still felt quite young and "light in my mind."



*Brian and Ina Stewart, Sutherland, c. 1939*



*Brian Stewart with his parents and siblings at Rhemarstaig, near Lairg, c. 1920. Brian is on the far right.*





*Brian Stewart with visiting students  
Douglas Beck and Joanne MacKinnon,  
September 1995*



*Brian Stewart with Carol Zall,  
September 1995*



*Brian Stewart, July 1994*

### CHAPTER THREE

#### STORYTELLING AND MEMORY

##### **OVERVIEW**

Having considered Brian Stewart's life history, we now turn to a consideration of Brian's relationship to storytelling: his knowledge and experience of storytelling, and his own comments on how he first heard and learned stories, how his memory works, and on storytelling practices in general. We will also consider his comments on how he remembers individual words and phrases, as well as other remarks which are relevant to the topics of memory and storytelling.

##### **ACTIVE OR PASSIVE TRADITION BEARER?**

Before considering how Brian learned and told stories, it is important to consider the matter of whether Brian is an active storyteller or a more passive bearer of tradition. While it is true that Brian has not been widely known as a storyteller during most of his life, it would not be accurate to describe him as a "passive" tradition bearer. He took an active interest in learning stories, music and song from a very early age, and although he did not have a reputation as a storyteller outside the family circle, he did tell stories within the family context. While it was most common for Brian to *hear* stories, usually from his grandmother Siùsie and his uncle Alasdair, he also sometimes told stories himself. In particular, he has said that he told stories to his Uncle Donald (one of his father's brothers), when Donald was "wanting to refresh his memory on the old stories again." Here Brian elaborates on this point:

**B.S.:** Oh, I told it to my own uncle. Because he was wanting to renew, to refresh his memory on them. I went over and told him some of them again, over again....

Well, there's an uncle of mine he was away a long time in Aberdeen, and. When he came back to these parts again, he, he was wanting to refresh his memory on the, old stories again....

Oh, he was Donald .... my father, he had three brothers. He was the oldest of the family. He was James, and there was Angus, he was the second. And Donald, he was the third. And Alec Dall, he was the fourth one.<sup>1</sup>

While Brian did tell stories to his Uncle Donald, he stresses that he did *not* tell them to his Uncle Alasdair, Ailidh Dall:

**C.Z.:** Would you ever tell stories back to him?

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<sup>1</sup> 14 April 1993, Tape 2 of 2.



**B.S.:** Oh, yes.... I told them to Donald ....

**C.Z.:** And what about to Alasdair?

**B.S.:** Oh no, I never told it to Alasdair, Alasdair he had plenty himself of it.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh, uh huh, but did you never just tell them for enjoyment, to each other, no?

**B.S.:** No.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh. But you told them with Donald.

**B.S.:** I told them to Donald, he wanted to ... hear them again....<sup>2</sup>

Here Brian indicates that because Ailidh Dall had "plenty" of stories -- and doubtless too because he was acknowledged as a master storyteller in the family -- Brian did not tell stories to him.<sup>3</sup> Still, Brian did tell stories in other contexts: he has told me that he often told stories to his wife, Ina, to pass the night as they sat by the fire, and that he has also told the stories to his own daughter and grandchildren. It would seem then that Brian did tell stories within the family to a certain extent, and could perhaps be characterised as an "occasional" teller of tales who always took a great interest in storytelling.<sup>4</sup>

## **LEARNING AND REMEMBERING STORIES**

### **Repeatedly Hearing Stories**

Brian has often indicated that he learned his stories by "taking an interest" in them as a young boy, and by repeatedly listening to his Grandmother Siùsie tell them. As I have detailed in Chapter Two, it was Brian's habit as a young boy to go to his grandmother's house after supper and to ask her to tell him stories, often until it was time for him to go home to bed.

....I was always with my granny, you know.... I'd be always to, in the house with her and, at night and, especially at night and, when my, Ailidh Dall would be playing the bagpipes, then I was very interested in the bagpipes.... I'd be down in Siù-- and then, when I came down, "Oh, come on, Granny, 'til you give us a story now.".... And then she was starting to tell the story and, och I would be very interested in the story and, I picked them all up, you know.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>14 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>3</sup>This impression that younger family members deferred to Ailidh Dall as the senior storyteller in the family was confirmed by Ailidh's grand-daughter, Essie Stewart, when she gave a talk to students of the School of Scottish Studies in March, 1998. She stated that if Ailidh Dall was present, others did not tell stories.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. C.W. von Sydow 1948: 48 51 for informative discussion of active and passive tradition bearers.

<sup>5</sup>30 October 1993, Tape 1 of 1.

Here, as on other occasions, Brian says that he was "interested" in the music and the stories -- surely an important ingredient in the making of any storyteller -- and describes how he "always" asked his grandmother for stories. Brian often mentions this fact, and on another occasion he described how he would visit his grandmother until he "got every one" of her stories:

**B.S.:** .... my Granny. Because her house was not, where she lived wasn't very far away from where I lived in, as a boy. And I would be, after supper every night I was down at my granny's. And I would be there 'til bedtime....

**C.Z.:** So she, she must have had loads of stories, or did she tell you the same stories many times?

**B.S.:** Aye. Not, not the same story every time, no, she would be telling me different stories.

**C.Z.:** Different stories. Could she tell you different stories every night?

**B.S.:** Oh, more or less.... Until I got every one that she had and then she ....

**C.Z.:** Then she'd tell them again?

**B.S.:** Aye.<sup>6</sup>

Here Brian identifies interest in the stories and repeated exposure to them as important factors in the learning process. This account of repeated requests for stories from an older family member is very similar to experiences described by other storytellers. Barbara McDermitt, for instance, states that the Scottish<sup>7</sup> storyteller Stanley Robertson has identified "hearing the same tales told many times" as one of the ways in which he learned stories as a child (1986: 356) and that the North Carolina storyteller Ray Hicks used to " ... ask his Grandfather Ben to tell the same stories over and over again" (1986: 338).

Indeed, Brian's already quoted comment that he himself told his uncle Donald stories when Donald was interested in "refreshing" his memory is another indicator that repeatedly hearing stories from a more experienced family member was an important way in which the Stewarts learned their stories. The fact that Donald asked to hear the stories from Brian again in order to "refresh his memory" shows that he felt that he had to hear the stories *told* again in order to remember them properly. It is particularly interesting that Brian told his uncle the stories rather than discussing or summarising them for him; clearly, it was important to *hear* the entire story as it should be told, rather than breaking it down and analysing it into units. This may also

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<sup>6</sup>14 April 1993, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>7</sup>Stanley Robertson is Scottish, but does not tell stories in Gaelic. He does, however, have Gaelic-speaking forebears.

indicate that rather than analysing the stories into constituent parts, Brian and his uncle related to them as whole entities which could only be dealt with intact, starting from the beginning and continuing through to the end. I am here reminded of some comments made by the South Uist storyteller Donald Alasdair Johnson in an interview with Donald Archie MacDonald published in the latter's article on "Some Aspects of Visual and Verbal Memory in Gaelic Storytelling" (1983), in which he indicates that rather than having a summary of a story in mind when he begins to tell it, the story emerges bit by bit as he proceeds: "As you go on ... the thing comes upon you.... It's easier to tell a story right through ... from the beginning.... It comes little by little to me...." (118-119). Again, this indicates that the story is not broken down into constituent parts in the (conscious) mind of the storyteller, but is instead an organic whole, and that the very process of telling it triggers the act of remembering.<sup>8</sup>

### **Repetition and Correction**

On occasion Brian has gone beyond saying that he was "interested" in the stories and has made comments which cast more light on the actual learning process. During one interview, he described how he would repeat stories back to his grandmother after he heard them from her:

**C.Z.:** Did you ever tell stories in front of your grandmother, did you ever tell your grandmother the stories?

**B.S.:** Oh, yes I told my uncles stories.

**C.Z.:** And what about your grandmother? Siùsie?

**B.S.:** Oh yes, I, sometimes I repeated them back [...] to see if I would have them all, you know. And, if I hadn't got them all, you see, she would say, "Oh, you missed this bit out of that."

**C.Z.:** Would she?

**B.S.:** Aye.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh. And then would you tell it again?

**B.S.:** Aye.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh. Until you got it right.

**B.S.:** Aye, got it right, yeah.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm, mmm hmm. Right. And--

**B.S.:** That's the way I learned.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Johnson's comments also resemble some that Brian has made on the topic of piping. In discussing how he remembers various pipe tunes, Brian on one occasion said "Do you know, when you'd be playing them, like everything else, it would come into your mind more of them" (1 April 1995, Tape 1 of 2).

<sup>9</sup>31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2.

These comments are particularly telling and are extremely interesting: Brian actually repeated the stories back to his grandmother and she would correct him if he had not remembered the story correctly. This of course indicates that Siùsie considered there to be a correct way to tell the story, or at least set elements to be included in it, rather than conceiving of the story in a more fluid or improvisational way. Similar behaviour has been described by other storytellers. Donatien Laurent (1983: 113), for instance, tells how the Breton storyteller Jean-Louis le Rolland, after hearing stories from an old weaver, would repeat them to his sisters. According to Laurent, "...when he was wrong, they said: 'No! Here you went too far! You have omitted this episode or you put it in the wrong place. -- You have to go further back.' " Clearly this type of correction from close family members mirrors the situation which Brian recounts, and one may speculate that it was not uncommon in storytelling circles. Certainly such practices have been mentioned in relation to Gaelic storytelling; Delargy (1945: 181) states that "... it is no uncommon experience of mine to hear the listening women interrupt and correct the speaker" and D.A. Binchy speaks of similar behaviour (cf. 1961: 9).<sup>10</sup>

### **Reviewing or Practising Stories**

In addition to making an active effort to learn the stories from his grandmother as he heard them from her, it also seems to be the case that Brian would go over the stories in his own mind and practise them -- something which he says he still does. This is not unexpected, as there are many documented instances of Gaelic storytellers reporting similar practices. Delargy again cites examples of storytellers who practised their stories before going to the *taigh cèilidh* ("visiting house") (1945: 185,186,188,193), and Donald Archie MacDonald quotes the storyteller Angus MacLellan as saying that he consciously went over stories in his mind (1983: 123).

On one occasion, Brian told me that he used to review the stories directly after he had learned them from his grandmother, and that he also still goes over the stories now:

**C.Z.:** Say when your grandmother would tell you a story, afterwards, would you go over it in your head to, to get it straight?

**B.S.:** I just would go over it in my own mind, you know.

**C.Z.:** Right. Do you ever go over stories in your own mind now?

**B.S.:** Yes, I do. [*Tone of voice is very emphatic.*]

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<sup>10</sup>As regards research which has been done on this topic in relation to non-Gaelic storytelling, Ruth Finnegan states that "... there has until recently been relatively little culture-specific work on social strategies relating to memory..." (1992: 116).



**C.Z.:** And remember them, yeah?

**B.S.:** I'll go over them in my own mind.

**C.Z.:** Right. And do you --

**B.S.:** I go over what the minister preaches on a Sunday.<sup>11</sup>

Here Brian's added comment that not only does he go over stories in his mind but that he also goes over what the minister preaches gives us some insight into the general workings of his mind; he is in the habit of replaying not just traditional material, but *any* material which he finds to be of interest.<sup>12</sup> This is not the only time that Brian has said that he deliberately reviews stories in his mind. In a 1974 interview with Donald Archie MacDonald, the following exchange was recorded:

**D.A.M.:** 'S am bi sibh fhèin uaireanan, nuair a bhios sibh leibh fhèin, bi sibh a' smaoinichadh air na stòiridhean tha seo, a' toir an eanchainn asda mar sin?

**B.S.:** Bidh. Bidh. Bidh. Bidh mis' 'dol mach, [...] 'smaoinichdainn orr', bidh mi 'dol air ais cho fad' agus tha cuimhn' agam, 's rudan dhen t-seòrs' sin... Aye. 'S air rudan a bhithinn mi fhèin 'dèanamh, agus dhen a', 'm pàirt dhen an sluagh bha cuide ruinn an uair sin, 's bha beò an uair sin. 'S bhithinn 'dol air ais, tha mi 'creidsinn gu' bheil na h-uile gin mar sin, gu' tèid iad air ais uairean, a's a' chèill aig', gu' smaoinich aid air ais.<sup>13</sup>

*[D.A.M.: And do you yourself sometimes, when you're by yourself, do you think about these stories, analyse them like that?]*

*[B.S.: I do. I do. I do. I go out, [...] thinking about them, I go back as far as I can remember, and that sort of thing... Aye. And [I think about] things I myself used to do, and about the, some of the people who were with us then, and were living at that time. And I would go back, I think that everyone is like that, that they go back sometimes, in their mind, that they'll think back.]*

Here Brian notes that not only does he think back on the stories, he also thinks back over past times and about people he used to know. It is significant that Brian made this comment in 1974 when he was 63 years old and was still leading an active life. Were it not for this early evidence, one might have wondered whether Brian's habit of retreating to the sanctuary of memory and stories in his mind was not a result of being in a nursing home where his present experience was not as interesting as his

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<sup>11</sup>15 April 1993, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>12</sup>Here I would echo Donald Archie MacDonald's 1983 point that students of oral tradition could learn a great deal from psychologists who have studied memory and related cognitive activities; although such research is outside the scope of this thesis, I am sure that investigation of current research on memory could add a useful dimension to the discussion of Gaelic storytelling.

<sup>13</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA1974/27/A-B1.



past. But even when Brian was relatively young, he was in the habit of revisiting the past in his mind.

### **Interest in a Story or Song Identified as Key Factor**

On yet another occasion when I was questioning Brian about how he managed to remember stories and other information, he first attributed his good memory to God's help, but then went on to explain the process further as he related the ease with which he could learn a song from the radio:

**C.Z.:** What's the earliest you can remember? How far back can you go, you were saying you were four years old --

**B.S.:** Oh, I can go back to when I was four years of age....

**C.Z.:** Have you ever thought about how you manage to remember so many stories?

**B.S.:** Oh, no, but I don't know, but I just, trust in God. It's him that's keeping them maybe, not me. The Lord is keeping my memory. And, it's Him that does everything. That's the way I see it, anyhow.

**C.Z.:** But do you ever, kind of practice them in your head, or try to remember the words, or anything like that, or when you were younger did you, did you make a special effort to memorise words, or, things like that?

**B.S.:** Oh, yes, I may have. If for instance .... I was wanting to have it. Like, eh, when, eh ... the radio was there, on the other day, when Andy Stewart was singing on it, singing a song, eh ... Glencoe. I picked that up. And, another one, he said, he said ... "Come on to the ceilidh, come on to the ceilidh, by the sea of Loch Broom. Come by -- travel the morning, and wait 'til noon. Come at night, and go home by the moonlight."<sup>14</sup>

Here the key point which Brian makes is that he can pick up words to a song if he "was wanting to have it." Thus the aspect of the learning process which is apparent to his conscious mind is the interest which he takes in a song or a story, whereas the learning process itself may well be unconscious. This point is again emphasised in the dialogue which followed on from the above comments:

**C.Z.:** And if you heard a story, say, how long would it take you before you would know it?

**B.S.:** Oh, not very long.

**C.Z.:** Like, if you heard a story now, someone told you, you know, a different story, *Stòiridh a' ... Chòcaire*,<sup>15</sup> but it was a different *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* --

**B.S.:** Well, if I was interested in it, I would learn it right away.

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<sup>14</sup>30 March 1995, Tape 1 of 1.

<sup>15</sup>*Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* ("The Story of the Cook") is one of the stories in Brian's repertoire.

### Learning from Individuals

In addition to saying that he learns songs and stories if he is interested in them, Brian has on several occasions gone on to give precise details about people from whom he learned songs. This is significant, as it shows that Brian has fixed memories of when he first learned particular songs. Here Brian describes learning a song from his wife, and then goes on to describe how he learned another song from a crofter with whom he was working in Durness:

*[B.S. has just sung a song.]*

**B.S.:** It was my late wife that had it, it's from her that I got it from. One night we were way up west there, and, the two of us, sitting in a tent and, she started singing and, she started singing that song, and I made her sing it 'til I picked it up.

**C.Z.:** How long did it take you, how long does it take you?

**B.S.:** Oh, just a while of a night. I got it. She sang, she sang it two or three times, but och, she was a good singer. She's a beautiful singer. She would [put] a lovely voice to it, you know.

*[There is a break in the recording, which then resumes with B.S. singing another song, after which the conversation resumes as follows:]*

**C.Z.:** .... How do you remember it? It's amazing.

**B.S.:** Well it's quite easy.... Well I learned it in Durness itself, from a man that I was working with, in Durness, he, he had a croft. And he had a pair of horses, and he said to me, "Can you plough?"

"Yes," I say, "I can plough."

And, he says, "Would you take," he says, "that pair," he says, "and plough this [bit of] land for me."

So I -- he was Charlie White, the name of the man, in Durness. So I, I ploughed it, and then I harrowed it, and he sowed it.

**C.Z.:** How long did that take?

**B.S.:** Och, it would -- half a day.

**C.Z.:** Half a day. And when, did he teach you the song while you were working?

**B.S.:** Pardon?

**C.Z.:** Was it while you were working that he gave you the song?

**B.S.:** Yes, he --

**C.Z.:** You were working together?

**B.S.:** Yes, working together, yes.

**C.Z.:** Right. Hmm. *[Pause.]* Would a lot of people those days have, a lot of people would know different songs off, and tell them, sing them with each other?

**B.S.:** Aye.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>16 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2.

Here Brian's precise memory of a specific person, time and place being tied to the learning of a song is fascinating for the light it casts on the learning process. Brian describes a similar incident as follows:

[BS has just finished singing "Lord Ronald, My Son".]

**C.Z.:** Who was Lord Ronald?

**B.S.:** Well, he was a Lord Ronald.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh. And where did you learn that song?

**B.S.:** Aye, how did I hear that?

**C.Z.:** Where did you hear it?

**B.S.:** Och, I don't know, I heard it every -- I heard it first, well a chappie that was working with me, in the nineteen-thirties. From Scourie.

**C.Z.:** Scourie?

**B.S.:** Aye, Scourie in Sutherlandshire.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** His name was Tommy MacLeod.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm. What was -- what kind of work were you doing?

**B.S.:** Eh, we were taking in a new bit of land.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** And we --

**C.Z.:** The Forestry Commission?

**B.S.:** Aye -- no, it was just a local job. And there was .... trees been cut down, and the root died off, they had to blow the roots up, you know, to get the -- so that it could be plowed. So he came from Scourie, Tommy MacLeod.... And he come from ... Tarbert as well, Tarbert. Scourie. There's a little placies in it at the back, the back way, we call them back towns. There's a lot of crofties in it and ... he came from Tarbert.... But if you'll get Tommy, you'll get it.<sup>17</sup>

### **Songs Contrasted with Stories**

Again, the identification of the particular individual from whom the song was learned, as well as the specific place and time that this occurred, is noteworthy. It is also significant that Brian only recounts such specific details of time and place in relation to *songs*, the implication being that while the words to songs must be memorised, stories do not need to be remembered word for word. This gives weight to the supposition that the learning and memory processes related to learning entire stories are somewhat different from the straightforward memorisation used for committing songs or verse to memory. While learning a song may be a fixed act of memorisation which Brian can clearly remember and identify, the learning of stories seems to take place over time and cannot be dated with the same precision.

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<sup>17</sup>2 July 1994, Tape 1 of 2.

Here Brian's memory and learning seem to operate in a similar way to that indicated by another Gaelic storyteller, Angus MacLellan, who, in an article by Donald Archie MacDonald (1983), is quoted as differentiating between the way in which he learns set verses and the way in which he learns or remembers a story. Discussing a particular story which contains a set section of verse, MacLellan says that while he has a clear visual picture of much of the action of the story, he has no image corresponding to the verse:

You can learn the verse as you would learn a song or any kind of poetry... You needn't see a picture of it -- or you can see one if you want to, but you don't have to see it ... but I think you have to see the rest of the story as it happens ... or you can't remember it." (122)

Ray Hicks of North Carolina also differentiates between the processes used for learning stories and learning songs, explaining that memorisation plays a role in the learning of songs but not of stories. Discussing the telling of stories, Hicks says "It ain't like a song ya see. A song ya have to memorize ta make it sing on its tune, ya see" (MacDermitt 1986: 337). Such a statement again implies a distinct difference between the straightforward memorisation used for learning songs and the process by which stories are learned.

### **Learning and Remembering Formulaic Language**

One point of great interest in relation to Brian's memory is how he learned and remembers formulaic language -- the set phrases, dialogue and descriptions which often occur in his stories in much the same way each time. Although it is clear that this language is important to the stories, as it occurs over and over again in the same form, it is equally clear that it is difficult for Brian to consciously articulate the role that this language plays in his storytelling. He is often at a loss to explain how he has remembered the formalised set language of dialogue and runs which he often uses, but it is clear from his storytelling that he has internalised and remembered these set phrases and set pieces as he heard them and that he now repeats them in nearly the same way every time he uses them.<sup>18</sup> On some level he must have recognised these phrases, descriptions and bits of dialogue as being important to the story and must have internalised the concept that he should retain them unaltered, for in all of Brian's stories, the formalised language and dialogue are the parts which change the least

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<sup>18</sup>Brian's use of formalised language, set dialogue and runs is discussed in full in Chapter Four.

from telling to telling. On one occasion Brian did acknowledge that the formulaic words he uses remain the same from telling to telling:

**C.Z.:** ....And what about -- like, there are certain parts in it with special words, you know, like, like when you -- "*Tha mi a' cur mo gheasan -- tha mi a' cur --*" what is it?

**B.S.:** *Mo chrosan 's mo gheasan --*

**C.Z.:** *Mo chrosan 's mo gheasan*, and it's *trì màtha --*

**B.S.:** *Trì buaraichean màtha sìdh.*

**C.Z.:** Aye, that's --

**B.S.:** -- *nach stad aon oidhche agad ... gus am faigh thu fios feagal*, whatever it was.

**C.Z.:** That's right, *fios feagal an aon sgeul*. But that's always the same. Like every time you would tell that story, those words are always the same --

**B.S.:** Aye, always the same.<sup>19</sup>

[**C.Z.:** ....And what about -- like, there are certain parts in it with special words, you know, like, like when you -- "*I put my spells -- I put my --*" what is it?

**B.S.:** "*My spells and my crosses*" --

**C.Z.:** "*My spells and my crosses*", and it's "*the three [mothers]*" --

**B.S.:** "*The three fetters of the fairy [mothers]*".

**C.Z.:** Aye, that's --

**B.S.:** -- "*you won't stop one night ... until you obtain for me true knowledge*," whatever it was.

**C.Z.:** That's right, "*true knowledge of the one tale*". But that's always the same. Like every time you would tell that story, those words are always the same --

**B.S.:** Aye, always the same.]

Having had some success with this line of questioning, I proceeded to ask Brian how he learned such words, but he was unable to offer any explanation other than that he had learned the stories from his family:

**C.Z.:** How do you, how did you learn them to -- you know what I mean, how did you learn them to make sure that it was always the same?

**B.S.:** Well, I, I was learning them first from my granny, and from my uncle.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm, and what about, say, when people told stories, did other people ever correct them if they thought they got the words wrong? You know, did anyone ever put them right and say, "Oh no, you're not telling it right?"... Did people used to do that?

**B.S.:** [*Sounds as if B.S. pauses to think for a moment before responding:*] No.

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<sup>19</sup>30 March 1995, Tape 1 of 1.



**C.Z.:** No. Uh huh. But. I'm still trying to figure out how you remember the words the same way every time, do you know what I mean?

**B.S.:** Oh, I would remember the words of it, if I'm interested in anything.

This last comment of Brian's is significant, as he again emphasises that it is his *interest* in something which enables him to remember it, while the process by which he learns the words remains obscure.

I have discussed this issue of formulaic language with Brian on many occasions, with varying degrees of success. In the following instance, we are discussing the somewhat enigmatic term *fios feagal an aon sgeul*<sup>20</sup> which is the object of the hero's quest in *Stòiridh Ladhair*. Although Brian cannot say what the term means, he has still retained it in his tellings of the story.

**B.S.:** It, the, the other word, I don't know what it means, I don't think it means anything, just a, a word.

**C.Z.:** Right, but that's what your grandmother would have said.

**B.S.:** Aye.

**C.Z.:** So that's, that's the way you learned the story.

**B.S.:** Aye, when I was a boy, you see, I would be always, eh ... in with her.<sup>21</sup>

Here Brian cannot really explain how he has remembered the term which he says he does not think "means anything," and reiterates the explanation that he was "always in with" his grandmother. When I press him on the issue, it is clear he has not thought about it consciously:

[Following on from above:]

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm. So, when she would tell you stories, and there were words in it that, maybe you didn't know like, like when you have "*fios feagal an aon sgeul*" together, or when you have "*fear agus filidh*," yeah--

**B.S.:** *Fear agus filidh*.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>*Fios feagal an aon sgeul*: "true knowledge of the one tale". The phrase is usually associated with spells of obligation which require a character to obtain knowledge of the fate of a certain king. Brian's term *fios feagal an aon sgeul* is related to similar terms found in versions of *An Tuairsgheul Mòr* and the Irish story *Fios Fátha an aon scéil*, also sometimes known as *Fios Fátha an doimhin-scéil*. See *Béaloideas* I, pg. 105, where *fios fátha an doimhin-scéil* is glossed as "the significance of the profound tale" and there is more discussion of these terms. Cf. also Gillies 1981: 54 for discussion of Gaelic tales which deal with quests for "*fios fátha an aoinsgéil ar na mnáibh*" or similar. For a discussion of "Be-Spelling Incantations" see J.G. McKay 1940: 504.

<sup>21</sup>31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>22</sup>"*Fear agus filidh*"; this is another enigmatic term which Brian uses in his versions of *Stòiridh Ladhair*. Literally it means "a man and a poet". It has been suggested to me by Donald Archie



**C.Z.:** When you have words like that, that don't necessarily make that much sense, is--

**B.S.:** Well the *fear*, is a person.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** And *filidh*, *filidh* was the name.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh, right. And are those--

**B.S.:** *Ceann fear agus filidh* -- is the head.<sup>23</sup>

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** *Ceann fear*: the head of that fellow, *filidh*.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm, right. And how did you remember, say, things like *fios feagal an aon sgeul*, like, those special wo-- were those words special in any way?

**B.S.:** No, no, they weren't special.<sup>24</sup>

Here Brian's on-the-spot analysis of the term *ceann fear agus filidh* is most interesting. With his comment "*Ceann fear*: the head of that fellow, *filidh*," Brian makes it clear that the phrase does not make that much sense to him; and yet what is clear is that he has remembered and retained it unaltered despite its lack of meaning. Interestingly, however, he states that the words were not "special."

On another occasion I questioned Brian about these same formulaic phrases, and he told me that *fios feagal an aon sgeul* was "*direach facal*" ("just a word").<sup>25</sup> We then discussed some more of the story and when I asked him to translate *fios feagal an aon sgeul* he replied by saying "I cannot do it." Similarly, he could not translate the rather archaic phrase *trì buaraichean matha sìdh* ("the three fetters of the fairy [women]"), another phrase which he uses in his be-spelling formula and which is common in Gaelic stories. He thought for a long while and then said "*O chan eil fhios agam*" ("Oh I do not know"). While Brian was unable to say how he had remembered the words or what they meant, he did on this occasion acknowledge that the formulaic phrases were important to the story:

**C.Z.:** 'S na faclan sin, bha iad gu math cudthromach 'sa stòiridh, nach robh?

**B.S.:** Bha.

**C.Z.:** Aye, 's ... sin an aobhar carson a tha cuimhne agad orra, nach e?

[*B.S. makes an affirmative sound.*]

**C.Z.:** Uh huh. 'S ciamar a tha cuimhne agad air na faclan, o chionn 's nach eil iad gu math ciallach. They're not that meaningful. So --

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MacDonald that the term may have evolved from the proper name *Fearghus Filidh* ("Fergus the Poet"), which could easily have been changed to "*fear agus filidh*" over time.

<sup>23</sup>The word "*ceann*" means "head".

<sup>24</sup>31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>25</sup>13 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2.

**B.S.:** Och, I don't know, just, eh.

**C.Z.:** So how do you remember them after all this time, you know what I mean?

**B.S.:** I know, I know. Och, I remember them, all right.<sup>26</sup>

[**C.Z.:** *And those words, they were very important in the story, weren't they?*

**B.S.:** *Yes.*

**C.Z.:** *Aye, and ... that's the reason why you remember them, isn't it?*

[**B.S.** *makes an affirmative sound.*]

**C.Z.:** *Uh huh. And how do you remember the words, because they are not very meaningful. They're not that meaningful. So --*

**B.S.:** *Och, I don't know, just, eh.*

**C.Z.:** *So how do you remember them after all this time, you know what I mean?*

**B.S.:** *I know, I know. Och, I remember them, all right.]*

### **Visualisation and Visual Memory**

Related to the way in which Brian goes over stories and speech which he hears (e.g., the minister's sermon) in his mind is the question of what Brian's visual memory is like and whether he pictures the stories in his mind. In the following exchange, Brian and I are discussing memory and he himself brings up the subject of visual memory:

**C.Z.:** When I was talking to you yesterday, you said that when you were a little boy you would just remember the stories. How did you remember them?

**B.S.:** Oh, just it, I don't know, because I was like that, you know, anything I was interested in I could keep it.

**C.Z.:** Right. Do you have a good memory for anything you want to remember?

**B.S.:** Yes, I have a good memory. Thank goodness I have a good memory.

**C.Z.:** Mmm, that's a great thing to have.

**B.S.:** And I have a good memory of you in my, eh, I'll be seeing you in my vision. I'll always see --

**C.Z.:** Do you have a good memory for faces?

**B.S.:** Yes, I have a good memory of faces. I'll always see you in my vision. But good luck to you where you're going, I hope you'll be a success....

**C.Z.:** Can you remember places, too, the way places look?

**B.S.:** Yes.

**C.Z.:** Outdoors, and scenes and things like that?

**B.S.:** I can see it in my vision, you, your face and your way you're speaking to me, I see for years in my...[**B.S.** *trails off.*]

**C.Z.:** Right. So when you tell a story, do you see, do you see it happening?

**B.S.:** Aye.

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<sup>26</sup>13 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2.

**C.Z.:** Do you see the people, like when you tell the *Each Dubh* ("Black Horse"), do you see the horse?<sup>27</sup>

**B.S.:** Aye. [*Very emphatic tone of voice.*]

**C.Z.:** Yeah?

**B.S.:** Aye.

**C.Z.:** Do you see the, the prince, does he always look the same?

**B.S.:** I was one day here, and I was remembering a nurse that was in, she was a sister that was in Migdale, that's the home in Bonar Bridge. She was a thin creature. And I told my daughter, I says, I cannot remember her name. I said, I can see her, in my vision, I says. Everything I know about her, I says, but I cannot remember her name. And all of a sudden it came to me, her name. Och, I says, I got it now....<sup>28</sup>

Here although Brian does not always answer my questions directly, he gives a clear indication that he has a strong visual memory and that he often pictures people in his mind. Most significant for our study of Brian as a storyteller is his confirmation that he sees a story in his mind as he tells it, and that he sees the characters. During another interview we went over the same ground:

[*The tape has been paused and resumes with:*]

**B.S.:** Well, I cannot tell you, what I don't know, I just I remembered them, that's all.

**C.Z.:** Aye. Well what about, when you're telling them, do you see the people in your mind? You know what I mean?

**B.S.:**[*Here Brian sounds like he is considering the question and means it when he says:*] Aye.

**C.Z.:** Like do you have a picture of what they look like?

**B.S.:** Aye.

**C.Z.:** And then, like when you're telling what happens --

**B.S.:** You see, I lie in bed here sometimes and I think, and I can see you in my vision, I can see the girl I was telling you about<sup>29</sup> .... see her and I can, I can picture her just the same as if she was sitting there.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm. Like when you're talking on a telephone with someone --

**B.S.:** Pardon?

**C.Z.:** When you're talking on the telephone to someone, when you ever do, do you see them on the other side? Do you know what I mean?

**B.S.:** Aye. [*Tone of voice is emphatic.*]

**C.Z.:** Do you imagine them?

**B.S.:** Yes, I see them, I imagine it.

**C.Z.:** Right, so, so you tend to have a very visual way of looking at things.

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<sup>27</sup>Here I am referring to *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh* ("The Story of the Black Horse"), one of Brian's stories.

<sup>28</sup>15 April 1993, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>29</sup>Here Brian is referring to a friend he had mentioned earlier in the interview.



**B.S.:** Aye, I go back, I'll be sitting in bed, I go to bed and I'm thinking on a lot of things. My late wife, my father and mother and, I was very fond of my mother and father, you see....<sup>30</sup>

Here Brian's comments make it clear that his imagination and memory are highly visual. In addition to this, he again answers in the affirmative that he does indeed visualise the stories as he tells them or thinks about them.

While Brian's comments on the visual aspect of his imagination are interesting and indicate a high degree of internal visualisation accompanying his thought processes in general, they are a far cry from the comments made by Donald Alasdair Johnson in "Some Aspects of Visual and Verbal Memory in Gaelic Storytelling" (MacDonald 1983) in which the storyteller indicates that he sees the story happening as he tells it, and that this process is vital to his ability to tell stories. Indeed, the evidence which Alan Bruford cites in his article "Memory, Performance and Structure in Traditional Tales" (1983) indicates that visualisation functions in different ways for different storytellers. For Brian, it is clear that he has a highly visual memory and imagination and that the stories and their characters have a visual dimension in his mind; however, I have not found evidence that visualisation can be singled out as playing a distinct or specialised role in Brian's storytelling as may be the case with other individuals.

## SUMMARY

In this chapter we have reviewed the evidence provided by Brian Stewart himself about his early experiences of storytelling, how he learned stories, and how he has remembered them throughout his life. Although it is difficult for him to identify a specific process which has enabled him to learn and remember stories, it is clear that he identifies taking an interest in the material as a key component in his ability to learn and remember. Repeated hearing of the same tales is also an important part of the learning process. Of even greater interest is his description of the way in which he listened to stories told by his grandmother and then repeated them to her in order to learn them accurately; this is important evidence about the way in which Brian learned the stories, and about the way in which he and his grandmother -- and possibly other members of the Stewart family -- viewed the material and the way in which it was to be transmitted from one generation to another. Also significant is the evidence that Brian actively rehearses stories and other information in his mind, and

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<sup>30</sup>1 April 1995, Tape 1 of 2.



that he often consciously goes over memories and a wide range of material when he is on his own. Such conscious rehearsal is another important indication of the way in which Brian regards stories and storytelling, implying that the stories must be practised in order to be told in the right way. Brian's comments on visualisation indicate that, like many other storytellers, he does indeed "see" stories and characters in his mind's eye as he tells them or thinks about them; however, he does not single out visualisation as playing a crucial role in his ability to remember the stories, and the implication is that visualisation is just one aspect of a complex cognitive process associated with Brian's storytelling. Further evidence about the way in which he learns and remembers comes from Brian's ability to pinpoint individuals from whom he learned specific songs and the occasions on which he learned them; such evidence adds weight to the supposition that the process of learning a fixed song or a specific verse or group of verses is different from that of learning an entire story, both on a conscious and on a cognitive level. In contrast to his comments about learning songs, Brian's comments on formulaic language and his difficulty in explaining how he retains such language, indicate that here the storyteller is not consciously aware of the memory and learning processes, and that the acquisition and retention of this material must take place on some other level of consciousness. It indicates, too, that the conservative values surrounding such formalised language are ones which Brian has internalised without, perhaps, being fully aware of it. The fact that he seems to be unaware of the meaning of certain archaic set words or phrases yet is still able to repeatedly reproduce them in his storytelling indicates a belief (on some level) that these words are important to the story and that they must be retained, whether or not the storyteller fully understands them. This, in turn, may reflect the unspoken assumptions about storytelling -- the storytelling ethos -- with which Brian was raised.

Having considered Brian's comments on his own experience of storytelling, learning and memory we will now move on to an examination of the stories themselves.

## **PART TWO**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS OF THE STORIES

#### **OVERVIEW**

Having examined Brian Stewart's relationship to storytelling through a consideration of his own memories and comments, we now move to an investigation of the storytelling itself. As I have explained in Chapter One, the value of having multiple recordings of the same story from the same storyteller recorded over a large period of time is that it enables us to compare the story versions to each other and in so doing to address some fundamental questions about how the storyteller remembers and tells his stories. Many scholars of storytelling have been convinced of the importance of investigating such issues with greater precision, and as I have already documented in Chapter One, several of them call for the use of sound recordings to carry out such research.

The investigation which follows consists of a detailed comparison and analysis of nearly 40 separate recordings which have been made of nine of Brian's best stories over a span of 37 years. The different recordings of each story are first compared to each other in order to discover what variations or similarities may occur in terms of story structure at the episodic level. The ensuing discussion of structural variation and similarity then leads to a detailed consideration of related features of Brian's storytelling, including such features as repetition, the omission of details or episodes, the role of parallel episodes in stories and the functioning of logical links in Brian's storytelling.<sup>1</sup> Moving on to consider differences between story versions which occur within episodes, the discussion includes such features as the compression or expansion of detail, the presence or absence of repeatable material within stories, the rehearsal of dialogue within stories, and the importance of the storytelling context and its potential influence on the length and treatment of a story. The discussion also extends to a consideration of the storyteller's comments or behaviour while in the act of telling stories; such behaviour includes instances of self-correction when the storyteller realises he has made a mistake and re-tells a story or a section of a story in order to correct it, as well as his occasional inability to remember a section of a story and his subsequent effort to remember the forgotten detail or episode. Finally, the discussion moves on to a consideration of Brian's use of language, discussing at length his use of formalised or set language and comparing the way in which this

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<sup>1</sup>The terms "parallel episode," "logical links" and other specialised terminology mentioned in the overview are explained in detail in the appropriate sections below.

language is used from story to story. At the end of the chapter, I summarise the patterns and features which have emerged and draw conclusions about their implications for our investigation into the nature of Brian Stewart's storytelling.

## THE STORIES

### Basis for Selection

The first recordings of Brian Stewart telling stories date from 1958, and the latest recording considered in this thesis dates from 1995, making for a span of 37 years over which to compare different versions<sup>2</sup> of the same stories told by the same storyteller.<sup>3</sup> Not all of the stories in Brian's repertoire are considered in this thesis: there are 16 stories in the repertoire, as well as songs, pieces of poetry, and several story fragments, but for the purposes of this thesis I have chosen to work with nine of the stories. These stories can be described as Brian's "best" stories: the ones which he remembers best and which he retains in a "complete" form.<sup>4</sup> As my aim is to investigate Brian's storytelling dynamic, I have sought to work with the stories which Brian clearly knows well, and which he can therefore tell to the best of his ability. In addition to the fact that the nine stories which comprise our selection are the ones which Brian tells best, the majority of them (eight out of nine) are of roughly the same genre: they are heroic or international wonder tales, two of the heroic tales containing Fenian material. This means that they represent the type of long hero stories and adventures which, according to accounts, were extremely popular amongst the Gael through to modern times and thus arguably best represent the native storytelling tradition.<sup>5</sup> Of the stories not included, some are trickster tales (his *Seòras Bochanan* stories, which border on being anecdotes, and *Rùchdan Dona mac na Banntraich*); some are much shorter stories which again border on the anecdotal (*Am Buc Gobhar*); some are non-heroic adventures which contain international material but which are confused and lacking a firm shape (*Cù nan Cluasan Dearg*, *An Siachaire Gobha*); and others are simply fragments of stories. The nine stories to be examined therefore represent what we might call Brian's "primary repertoire," the

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<sup>2</sup>When referring to different "versions" of the same story I am referring to separate recordings made of the same story and do not intend any other meanings which may be associated with the word "version".

<sup>3</sup>See the subsection on "Sources" in the section on "Methodology" at the beginning of this thesis for details of the collection and recording of the stories.

<sup>4</sup>The word "complete" is problematic when referring to traditional stories, but I use it here to indicate that the stories are not fragments.

<sup>5</sup>For assertions that such tales have been highly esteemed in Gaelic tradition, see Bruford, 1987; Delargy 1945: 192, 211; and MacDonald 1989: 187.

stories which he remembers and tells best and which best represent the long heroic stories which have been so popular in Gaelic tradition.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Nine Stories**<sup>7</sup>

The stories which I shall consider are as follows:<sup>8</sup>

1. *Am Bodach Baigeir* ("The Old Beggar"). [AT 303].<sup>9</sup>
2. *Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich* ("Campbell's Story"). [Related to AT 880, 884A and 890].
3. *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* ("The Story of the Cook"). [AT 300].
4. *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh* ("The Story of the Black Horse"). [Related to AT 531].
5. *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* ("The Lad of the Skin Coverings"). [A version of Cèadach, a native hero tale].
6. *Stòiridh Ladhair* ("The Story of Ladhar"). [A native hero tale].
7. *Stòiridh Loircein* ("The Story of Loircean"). [Related to AT 301 and the native hero tale *Eachtra Iollainn Airmidheirg*].
8. *Am Maraiche Màirneal* ("The Seaworthy Mariner"). [Related to AT 433B].
9. *Stòiridh Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* ("The Story of Ossian after the Fenians"). [A native hero tale].

### **Scope of Comparison**

For each of the stories listed above there are either four or five recordings, each of which is transcribed and included in Appendix B. With a total of 39 story transcripts to examine, we can now address several important questions about Brian Stewart's storytelling by looking to the evidence which the multiple story versions provide.<sup>10</sup> One of the most obvious areas of inquiry is whether or not the versions of the same story are more or less identical to each other, or whether there is a great deal of

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<sup>6</sup>In addition to the logic of examining the stories which Brian remembers in full, there is also the fact that it would have been unfeasible to examine all the stories ever recorded from him, as the amount of time required to produce accurate transcriptions of these stories would have far exceeded the time limits imposed by a finite project such as a doctoral thesis. It is hoped that further work will be carried out on the other stories, as well as the songs, in Brian Stewart's repertoire in the future.

<sup>7</sup>For full tale type and background information on the stories, see Appendix A.

<sup>8</sup>N.B. Titles used are those by which Brian Stewart refers to the stories.

<sup>9</sup>"AT" numbers refer to the Aarne-Thompson system of tale classification; see Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson 1961.

<sup>10</sup>In addition to the recordings of the 39 stories which are transcribed in Appendix B, I have also made use of additional recordings made by myself or others which include detailed discussions *about* the stories or sections of the stories. In addition to this, I have also consulted recordings of Brian's relatives telling some of the same stories, as well as recent recordings of Brian made by Dr. John Shaw of the School of Scottish Studies. References and tape numbers are provided for all of these recordings as they are mentioned in our discussion.



variation between them; and if there is variation, what types of variation occur. There are several levels on which comparisons can be made between the story versions. On the structural level, one can examine the versions to see whether the overall shape of the story remains the same from telling to telling, and one can explore the reasons behind any variations in the story's structure. On the level of language, comparisons can be made as to the type of wording used, whether or not stock phrasing or dialogue is employed, whether runs or stock epithets are used, and in all of these cases we can measure the extent to which the use of such language varies between versions of the same story. This, in turn, can tell us whether different features of storytelling, such as the use of set language or of runs, are associated with particular stories, or whether such features are used freely throughout all the stories. Thus in addition to making comparisons within a group of story versions, comparisons will also be made *across* Brian Stewart's repertoire, identifying patterns of structure and language which emerge from viewing the selection of stories as a whole. Additional topics which will be explored are those of memory, learning and the storyteller's conception of the structure of the story: aspects of all of these are revealed through a careful examination of instances of self-correction, re-capping, and the clarification of details of the story made by the storyteller while in the process of telling stories or immediately after he finishes telling stories.

#### **ANALYSIS OF STORY STRUCTURE**

Our first area of inquiry is the structure of the stories: what can having four or five versions of the same story tell us about how the story is told and about what happens to the shape of the story from telling to telling? Of particular interest is whether the structure of the story remains basically the same throughout the versions, or whether the storyteller changes the shape of the story from telling to telling.

#### **Simplified Plot Summaries: the Skeletons of the Stories**

In referring to the "shape" of the story, I am referring to the most basic structure of the story which lies beneath all the many details and ornamental language with which the storyteller may clothe the story, and which may make different versions of the same story appear rather different from one another at first glance. It is in fact often difficult to discern the skeleton beneath the stories, especially when they are full of colourful motifs or interesting dialogue, or when partially remembered details and hesitations or corrections made by the storyteller create an unclear impression of the story. Therefore, in order to look at the skeletal structure of the stories, I have devised what I call "simplified plot summaries" for each one of them. These summaries are

extremely simplified descriptions of the basic actions which comprise the stories -- the skeletons of the stories stripped of all flesh. They have been compiled after careful examination of all the versions of each story, and arranged in order of episodes. Of course there is no way to argue that these episodic breakdowns represent the only way of dissecting the stories -- surely slightly different arrangements would be possible -- but I have tried to keep the summaries as simple as possible and to describe only the basic action which must occur in the episode in order to move the story forward. So, for example, in a story such as *Am Maraiche Màirneal* in which the story begins with a king's son being given a shirt as a gift by his stepmother, this is the only information contained in the simplified plot summary for the first episode. There may in fact be stock dialogue exchanged between the boy and his stepmother or the boy and his father in some versions, and there may be differences between versions in terms of whether the king is referred to as the king of France, the king of Ireland, or simply "the king"; however, none of these details are mentioned in the plot summary, as the only *action* which is necessary to move the story forward is the giving of the shirt to the boy by his stepmother. This, then, is the way in which I have tried to organise the plot summaries. Here we already see one of the benefits of having several versions of the same story: without multiple versions, it would have been difficult to list with great certainty the episodes of the story, for there is always the possibility that some of the details, motifs or even episodes are anomalies not generally used or included by the storyteller in the story. With a number of story versions, however, it becomes much easier to map out a set of basic events which *usually* make up the story.

I should point out that such an oversimplification of the structure of the stories is for the specific purpose of comparing the *shape* of the story versions to one another, and that such oversimplification can give a distorted impression of the degree to which the versions differ to or resemble one another in regard to language, characters, ornament, the use of what I call "optional repeat episodes" and "optional repeat details" (see below), and so on. As such the story skeletons are only intended for the comparison of versions on a structural level, and I shall compare the versions to each other in more complex ways below.

### **Episode Charts**

After mapping the skeleton plot summaries for each story, I have been able to compare the versions of each story to each other by making a chart which shows which episodes occur in each version, and in what order they appear. I have also

included notes to the charts which provide such relevant information as might help to give an idea of the overall shape of each version. These notes are mainly concerned with structural features of the different versions (e.g., the omission of an episode or the inclusion of an extra incident) but also make mention of variations in motifs when these affect overall story structure. The resulting charts enable one to get a general sense of how the versions of each story compare to one another in terms of overall structure.

### **The Summaries and Charts**

I have paired the simplified plot summary for each story with the corresponding episode chart comparing the different versions of the story, so that the reader may see the plot summary and chart for each story at the same time. The charts and summaries for all nine stories appear on the following pages.

### **Am Bodach Baigeir - Simplified Plot Summary**

**Episode 1:** A beggar passing a king's castle predicts that although the king's two sons are fond of one another, one of them will one day kill the other.

**Episode 2:** When the brothers have grown up, one of them leaves the kingdom in order to prove the beggar's prophecy wrong. He leaves behind him a life token by which his brother will know whether he is dead or alive.

**Episode 3:** The brother settles in a new kingdom and marries. One night he is lured away from his home by a fox and then tricked and killed by an evil hag.

**Episode 4:** The second brother learns of his brother's death and sets out to find him. He and his brother are so alike that when he finds his brother's home, the first brother's wife does not realise that the second brother is not her own husband. When they go to sleep, the second brother lays a sword between himself and his brother's wife. He is lured away and encounters the same hag who killed his brother. This time the second brother is not tricked by her and instead tricks and kills the hag. He revives his brother, but when the first brother learns that the second brother was in bed with his wife the previous night, the first brother kills the second brother.

**Episode 5:** The first brother returns to his wife but her comments make him realise his mistake, and he brings his brother back to life. The story ends happily, but the brothers acknowledge that they did not manage to prove the beggar wrong.

**Table 4.1**

**Comparison of Versions - Am Bodach Baigeir**

<b><u>1974</u> SA 1974/32</b>	<b><u>May 1974</u> LS Tape 954</b>	<b><u>May 1974</u> (Continued)</b>	<b><u>1977</u> LS Tape 956</b>	<b><u>24 September</u> <u>1993</u></b>
1	1	1	1	story begins with Episode 3 - see notes
2	2	2	2	—
3	4 B.S. realises mistake, begins story again.	3	3	3 (episodes 3 & 4 initially confused, followed by self-correction and re-cap)
4	[see next column]	4	4	4
5		5	5	5

**Notes:**

**May 1974 version:** B.S. begins to tell Episode 4 but realises he has omitted Episode 3. The tape is stopped and resumes with a re-cap of the story from the beginning, as in the next column. When B.S. reaches Episode 3 he again starts with the link detail which previously led him into Episode 4, but this time regains the thread of the story and continues with Episode 3.

**24 September 1993 version:** Here only the second half of the story is present as it is used as a frame story for *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*. The second half of the story follows on from *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, while the first half is not used at all -- hence the absence of the first two episodes. When Brian leads into the story from *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* he initially confuses elements of Episodes 3 and 4, but he realises the mistake and corrects himself. This is followed by a re-cap of Episode 3 in its corrected form. This is a strong indication that B.S. has a clear idea of a set structure which the story must follow, and also has implications for the way in which he understands the story's relationship to *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*.



## **Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich – Simplified Plot Summary**

**Episode 1:** A sea captain invites Campbell and his wife aboard his ship.

**Episode 2:** After some time aboard ship, Campbell realises they are far out to sea. The captain reveals that he is after Campbell's wife and plans to make Campbell walk the plank. Campbell's wife pleads for Campbell to be put into a water-tight box with food and water and thrown overboard. Her request is granted.

**Episode 3:** Campbell's box washes up on a beach and a nearby shepherd frees him from the box and helps him.

**Episode 4:** Meanwhile, Campbell's wife, having refused to sleep with the captain, has been put to shore. Having disguised herself as a boy, she finds work as a stable hand on an estate. She is propositioned by the laird's wife but refuses her advances. When the laird's wife cries rape in revenge, Campbell's wife reveals her true gender. The laird sends his wife away in punishment, and makes advances on Campbell's wife now that he knows she is a woman.

**Episode 5:** Campbell comes as a wanderer to the same estate where his wife is. He and his wife meet in the public house and recognise each other. They plan their escape, and the next day they flee on horseback until they reach their own home.

**Table 4.2**

**Comparison of Versions - *Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich***

<b><u>1974</u> SA1974/33</b>	<b><u>1975</u> LS Tape 1003</b>	<b><u>24 September</u> <u>1993</u></b>	<b><u>2 July 1994</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>recording breaks off here</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**Notes**

**1993 version:** This telling is very condensed.

**1994 version:** In Episode 4 the details of the wife's refusing to sleep with the sea captain are omitted, and the episode begins with the wife's adventures on land.

### **Stòiridh a' Chòcaire – Simplified Plot Summary**

**Episode 1:** A boy (the hero) meets an old woman (sometimes the hen-wife), and they discuss the fact that the king's daughter is to marry the cook.

**Episode 2:** The boy meets the princess in a wood. She tells him that giants are coming to take her away, and that the man who is supposed to save her (the cook) is up a tree. When the giant arrives, the boy fights and kills him. He leaves, and the cook takes credit for killing the giant.

**Episode 3:** The hero returns the next day and again saves the princess while the cook hides in a tree.

**Episode 4:** A ball is organised to which everyone is invited. A contest of strength is organised and every man tries to break an ox's shank bone with his bare hand. The cook hurts his hand when he tries, but the hero succeeds. The boy produces the giants' eyes and tongues, and is revealed as the true hero.

**Episode 5:** The boy and the princess marry.

**Table 4.3**

**Comparison of Versions - *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire***

<b><u>1973</u> LS Tape 965</b>	<b><u>1974</u> SA 1974/27-28</b>	<b><u>24 September</u> <u>1993</u></b>	<b><u>18 September</u> <u>1995</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>"optional repeat" episode 3 not here</b>	<b>"optional repeat" episode 3 not here</b>
<b>4 (recording ends)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>—</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5 (condensed)</b>	<b>5 (condensed)</b>

**Notes**

**General:** The term "optional repeat episode" refers to an episode which basically repeats the action of a previous episode, and which seems to be used by the storyteller in order to lengthen the story or to give it more colour and detail. There is a detailed discussion of optional repeat episodes further on in this section.

**1973 version:** The recording breaks off before the boy is revealed as the true hero at the end of Episode 4.

**1995 version:** In Episode 1 the boy and the old woman discuss the fact that the cook is supposed to save the princess from some giants, but mention is not yet made of the marriage of the cook and the princess.

## **Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh – Simplified Plot Summary**

**Episode 1:** The prince's step-mother gives him a black horse as a gift.

**Episode 2:** Having set off with the horse, the prince finds a strand of a woman's hair on the road. He keeps it despite the talking horse's warning that it will cause him trouble.

**Episode 3:** While the prince is dancing at a ball, the hair falls out of his pocket and is seen by the king of the castle. The king charges the prince with finding the woman whose hair it is. The horse knows where to find the woman, who is a princess. He takes the prince over the sea to the island where she lives. Following the horse's instructions, the prince kidnaps the princess and brings her to the king.

**Episode 4:** The princess then says that the prince must return to her island to recover her shaggy dun filly and other possessions for her. The prince and the black horse return to the island and succeed in accomplishing their task.

**Episode 5:** The black horse forces the prince to kill him and put his bones in a well. The prince does so reluctantly and mourns the loss of his horse. A young man appears and explains that he was the black horse, who was in reality a man under enchantment. He says that he had to go on the adventures with the prince in order to be returned to human form.

**Episode 6:** The same thing happens to the princess with her shaggy dun filly: she kills her, and then discovers that the filly was really an enchanted woman. The "black horse" and the "shaggy dun filly," now both in human form, marry, as do the prince and the princess.



**Table 4.4:**

**Comparison of Versions - *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh***

<b><u>1974</u> <u>SA 1974/26</u></b>	<b><u>May 1974</u> <u>LS Tape 954</u></b>	<b><u>May 1978</u> <u>LS Tape 1006</u></b>	<b><u>15 April 1993</u></b>	<b><u>30 October</u> <u>1993</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> <b>(condensed)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

**Notes:**

In the 1974 School of Scottish Studies (SA 1974/26) version as well as in the May 1978 version, there is no mention of the prince and princess marrying in Episode 6. In the April 1993 version, it is unclear whether the prince and princess marry.

## *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn – Simplified Plot Summary*

**Episode 1:** A young king loses his way while hunting. He takes shelter at a house and the next morning is told that he cannot leave until he christens his son. When he expresses surprise, he is told that he has been in the house for some time. The son born to him is *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*.

**Episode 2:** *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* joins the *Fèinn* (Fionn's warrior band) and causes trouble by killing Fionn's/the king's men.<sup>11</sup> Fionn/the king seeks advice from Seanagaidh Seanagal/the Hen-Wife,<sup>12</sup> who advises that *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* should be forced to perform feats of valour. He is made to leap backwards and forwards over a loch while catching daggers, and then to race with the fleet-footed character Caoilte (one of Fionn's men) up a hill. He overtakes Caoilte and turns him into a deer.

**Episode 3:** Fionn learns that he must go to *Eilean nam Muc* (literally "the Isle of Pigs" - possibly the Isle of Muck) and that only *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* will be able to help him there. He seeks *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*'s mother's permission for her son to accompany him, and finally obtains her consent.

**Episode 4:** On *Eilean nam Muc*, *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* accomplishes several tasks which Fionn's men are unable to complete, such as cleaning out a house, getting peats for a fire, and killing and skinning a bull. He kills a hag who comes to challenge him during the night.

**Episode 5:** On the sea journey home, *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* assumes the form of a dark cloud and engages in a mid-air battle with his brother, also in the form of a dark cloud. As *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* returns to the ship, he is accidentally killed by Fionn, who forgets to keep the point of his spear turned away from *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*.

**Episode 6:** *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* is revived by his mother. He then sets off to revive his brother, whom he killed in the mid-air battle. He brings his brother back to life, and then returns to the *Fèinn*.

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<sup>11</sup>The name "Fionn" (often written "Finn" in English) is sometimes used interchangeably with the title "the king" in this story.

<sup>12</sup>The character of "Seanagaidh Seanagal" is a "wise woman" character, and is sometimes used interchangeably with the "Cailleach nan Cearc" or Hen-Wife character.

**Table 4.5**

**Comparison of Versions - Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn**

<b><u>1958</u></b> <b>SA 1958/72-73</b>	<b><u>1973</u></b> <b>LS Tape 956</b>	<b><u>16 April 1993</u></b>	<b><u>24 September</u></b> <b><u>1993</u></b>	<b><u>2 July 1994</u></b>
<b>1</b> (+ <i>Bodach Baigeir</i> motif)	<b>different opening episode</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> (+ extra quest to Isle of Big Men)	<b>2</b> (Caoilte incident not in story at all)	<b>2</b> (Caoilte incident resolved later)	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b> (Caoilte incident resolved later)
<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b> (+ <i>Maraiche Màirneal</i> motif)	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> (episode re-capped)	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b> (no mention of Gille's revival)

**Notes**

**General:** In both the April 1993 version and the 1994 version, the incident in which Caoilte is turned into a deer is not resolved until later in the story (Episode 6), while in the 1958 and September 1993 versions it is resolved in Episode 2. Caoilte does not appear at all in the 1973 version. It would appear that this element of the story is unstable.

**1958 version:** This version is longer and more detailed than other versions, and contains some extra incidents which are significant to the story's structure. Episode 1 contains the added character of the *Bodach Baigeir* ("old beggar") who predicts that one of the king's sons will one day kill the other, and there is an extra quest in Episode 2 to the Isle of the Big Men in order to obtain a magical cup. The beginning

of Episode 6 is told twice due to the interruption of the recording. This provides a good example of re-capping.

**1973 version:** This version varies from the others in that the usual Episode 1 is absent and is replaced with a different brief opening. In Episode 6 *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*'s brother comes to revive him, rather than *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* going to revive his brother, as happens in the other versions.

**September 1993 version:** The first minute or two of the story was not recorded. Episode 2 (in partial form) and Episode 3 swap places in this version, which affects the clarity of the story. In Episode 4, part of a stock incident involving the *Maraiche Màirneal* ("Seaworthy Mariner") appears; this incident is otherwise confined to the *Maraiche Màirneal* story.

**1994 version:** There is no specific mention of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*'s resurrection in Episode 6.

## Stòiridh Ladhair – Simplified Plot Summary

**Episode 1:** While the young king laments his dead father, a stranger (Ladhar) appears and challenges him. They fight and the king defeats Ladhar and accepts him as his servant.

**Episode 2:** The king plays and wins a game of cards with a strange woman. As his prize, he receives his choice of wife from the woman.

**Episode 3:** The king again plays cards with the woman. He again wins and as a prize he receives his choice of horse from the woman.

**Episode 4:** The king plays a game of dice with the stranger woman. The woman wins. For her prize, she puts the king under obligation to obtain *fios feagal an aon sgeul* ("true knowledge of the one tale") for her. The king and Ladhar set out to find *fios feagal an aon sgeul*. They come to another kingdom where Ladhar forces another king to tell him the story of *fios feagal an aon sgeul*, which comprises an in-tale. After hearing the story, a similar set of events befalls Ladhar and the king. They survive the adventure and return home with the knowledge they were required to obtain.

**Episode 5:** The woman again wins at a game of dice. For her prize, she puts the king under obligation to obtain *ceann fear agus filidh*, the head of a giant.<sup>13</sup> The young king must go on this quest alone. He completes the task successfully and returns to his kingdom.

**Episode 6:** The young king gives the giant's head to Ladhar, who strikes and kills the woman with it.

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<sup>13</sup>The term "*ceann fear agus filidh*" (literally "the head of a man and a poet") may be derived from "*ceann Fearghus Filidh*" ("the head of Fergus the Poet"), but Brian understands it to be the head of a giant. The idea that the phrase derives from *Fearghus Filidh* was first suggested to me by Donald Archie MacDonald of the School of Scottish Studies, for which I am grateful.



**Table 4.6**

**Comparison of Versions - Stòiridh Ladhair**

<b><u>1974</u> SA 1974/32</b>	<b><u>May 1978</u> LS Tape 1006</b>	<b><u>14 May 1994</u></b>	<b><u>1 April 1995</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>5</b> <b>(cannot</b> <b>remember</b> <b>central incident;</b> <b>synopsis given)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

**Notes**

**General:** In both Episodes 2 and 3, a card game is played and a prize is given to the winner: in one instance the king wins a wife, in another he wins a horse. The order in which these occur is of no significance to the logic of the story. For the purpose of comparison, I have called the episode in which a wife is won "Episode 2" and the episode in which a horse is won "Episode 3"; however, the episodes vary in the order in which they appear.

**1994 version:** In Episode 2 a game of dice, not cards, is played. In Episode 5, a second game of dice is not mentioned.

**1995 version:** Following the winning of a horse (Episode 3), there is no repeat episode in which a wife is won. Episode 4, a quest for "*fios feagal an aon sgeul*" ("true knowledge of the one tale") is not included. Episode 5 is very condensed.

## **Stòiridh Loircein – Simplified Plot Summary**

**Episode 1:** While the King is out hunting, someone (usually a little red man) emerges from the heather and knocks out some of his teeth.

**Episode 2:** The king's two sons set sail in search of their father's teeth. They take Loircean (the youngest brother) with them as a helper. Loircean climbs the mast of the ship and steers them to an island which is on fire. Loircean puts out the fire.

**Episode 3:** Loircean visits three underground castles (copper, silver, gold) belonging to giants in search of his father's teeth. He must descend in a creel/lift in order to reach the castles. He kills the giants at the first two castles. On the advice of a woman from one of the first two castles, Loircean pretends to be a mender of bows when he meets the giant of the gold castle. He mends the giant's bow and then shoots him in a mole on his forehead, killing him. Loircean takes the giants' wives, their valuables and their dogs and sends the women up in the lift to his brothers. The brothers betray Loircean by failing to pull him up in the lift.

**Episode 4:** Loircean returns to his father's kingdom with the women's valuables and dogs. He hides himself at the house of a smith. The smith enters the dogs in a race organised by the king, but they are recognised by the women and taken away. The women ask the smith to produce their valuables; he despairs, but Loircean pretends to make the items at night and the smith gives the items to the women. The woman from the gold castle forces the smith to tell her the truth about where he got the valuables.

**Episode 5:** The woman from the gold castle visits the queen and gives her a corset as a gift. When the queen puts the corset on, the woman from the gold castle tightens the corset (which is full of pins) until the queen admits that her two oldest sons were not fathered by the king and that Loircean is the only true son of the king. Loircean marries the woman from the gold castle and the half-brothers are sent away.

**Table 4.7**

**Comparison of Versions - *Stòiridh Loircein***

<b><u>1974</u> SA 1974/27</b>	<b><u>24 February</u> <u>1993</u></b>	<b><u>1 July 1994</u></b>	<b><u>31 March 1995</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>3</b> <b>(Loircean's</b> <b>return home</b> <b>unclear; he</b> <b>restores father's</b> <b>teeth)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>(Loircean</b> <b>returns with</b> <b>brothers,</b> <b>restores father's</b> <b>teeth)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>(Loircean's</b> <b>return home is</b> <b>unclear)</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(condensed)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(condensed)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(condensed)</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**Notes**

**General:** In the 1974 version the half-brothers abandon Loircean on the island at the end of Episode 3, while in the 1994 version Loircean returns with the brothers and in the 1993 and 1995 versions it is not clear how Loircean leaves the island. Episode 4 is condensed and not entirely clear in all the 1990s versions, and the simplified plot summary for this episode is based mostly on the early (1974) version.

**1974 version:** In Episode 5 the half-brothers are not sent away but instead simply marry the women from the copper and silver castles.

**1994 version:** This version is not a complete telling of the story but instead a conversation *about* the story during which Brian tells various parts of it. However, as Brian covers the main points of the story, I have plotted it here for the sake of comparison. Of course a conversation about a story cannot be an adequate substitute for an actual telling of a story, but in the absence of another recording it was deemed useful to include this data in the comparison; the conversation is transcribed along with the other stories in Appendix B. All other versions of stories in the charts are complete tellings.

**1995 version:** Here a hen-wife character is substituted for the woman from the gold castle.

## *Am Maraiche Màirneal – Simplified Plot Summary*

**Episode 1:** The king's son is given a shirt by his step-mother. He puts it on and it turns into a snake upon him.

**Episode 2:** The prince enlists the *Maraiche Màirneal* (the "Seaworthy Mariner") to bring him to *Eilean Loch Leug* ("the Island of Loch Leug") where there is a woman who might cure him. When they arrive the Mariner sends the prince ashore for fresh water.

**Episode 3:** The woman of the island's daughter sees the prince and falls in love with him. She convinces her mother to help the boy. The woman entices the snake away from the boy by the smell of meat which is cooking in a frying pan. The snake jumps into the pan, but it is so hot that it jumps out again and jumps onto the daughter's breast. The mother is ready with a cleaver and kills the snake, taking the girl's breast with it. The girl is given a golden tip for her breast.

**Episode 4:** The prince and the girl marry and remain in the island. The hen-wife and her son hatch a plan to trick the prince into believing that his wife has been unfaithful. The plan works, and in a rage, the prince leaves and travels as a wandering beggar.

**Episode 5:** One day the prince comes to a wood and meets a man who is ill but who can be cured by a drink from a nearby well. The well is guarded by wild animals, and the prince must steal a cup from a lion's paw. He does so, and cures the man. The man tells the prince that the cup is magic and will transport him wherever he wishes to go. The prince wishes he were back in the Isle of Loch Leug and immediately arrives there.

**Episode 6:** The prince goes as a musician to his old home. The prince's wife has been bed-ridden since the prince left, but hears the music and gets out of bed. After ascertaining that her husband will not be harmed by her brothers, she reveals that her husband the prince has returned, and the two are reunited.

**Table 4.8**

**Comparison of Versions - *Am Maraiche Màirneal***

<u>1974</u> SA1974/26	<u>14 April 1993</u>	<u>31 March 1995</u>	<u>18 September</u> <u>1995</u>
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6

**Notes**

**31 March 1995 version:** There is no explicit mention of prince and girl marrying in Episode 4 (but the woman is referred to as his wife towards the end of the episode).



### *Stòiridh Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn' – Simplified Plot Summary*

**Episode 1:** On a stormy night Oisean lets a black crow take shelter with him. When he wakes in the morning, the crow has turned into the most beautiful woman he has ever seen. The woman says that she will be Oisean's wife as long as he does not mention the form in which she arrived (i.e., as a crow).

**Episode 2:** Oisean goes hunting and leaves his wife at home with a greyhound bitch which is about to give birth. Oisean warns his wife not to give away the first-born pup. When Oisean returns home, he discovers that his wife has broken her promise (albeit under threat of death). In anger, Oisean calls her an "ugly crow," whereupon she turns into a bird and flies away. Oisean gives chase but cannot catch her. Finally, Oisean's wife tells him that she cannot stay with him any longer, but she gives him a gold ring and tells him that as long as he keeps it on his finger, he will live, but if he takes it off he will die.

**Episode 3:** Oisean, now old and weak, meets St. Patrick ("*Para Naomh Clèireach*," literally "Para Holy Cleric"). He tells him stories of the Fèinn (Fionn's warrior band), which Patrick writes down. One day Patrick shows Oisean a deer he has killed and asks if he has ever seen such a large deer. Oisean tells him that in the days of the Fèinn, he often saw the baby blackbirds with legs larger than the deer Patrick has killed. Patrick, thinking that Oisean has been telling him lies, becomes enraged and throws the books which he has been writing from Oisean's dictation into the fire.

**Episode 4:** With the help of a servant boy, Oisean returns to the realm of the Fèinn, where he kills and eats huge deer and also kills a huge blackbird. He brings back the leg of the blackbird to prove to Patrick that he did not lie to him. When Patrick sees the huge bone, he is remorseful and tries to salvage what is left of the books written from Oisean's dictation.

**Episode 5:** Oisean's servant boy takes him to a stream to bathe him, at which time he removes Oisean's ring and puts it on a nearby rock. A crow appears and takes the ring. Oisean kills the boy so that he will never tell anyone what he saw in the realm of the Fèinn, and then Oisean himself dies.

**Table 4.9**

**Comparison of Versions - *Stòiridh Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'***

<b><u>1958</u> SA 1958/72</b>	<b><u>1973</u> LS Tape 965</b>	<b><u>April 1979</u> LS Tape 1111</b>	<b><u>14 April 1993</u></b>	<b><u>18 September</u> <u>1995</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Episode 2 not present</b>	<b>Episode 2 not present</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4 (details from omitted Episode 2 appear between Episodes 4 &amp; 5)</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5 (includes details from the omitted Episode 2)</b>

**Notes:**

**General:** In both the 1993 and 1995 versions, Episode 2 is not included. However, vital information from the episode which is necessary for the resolution of the story is supplied towards the end of each version. Also, the 1995 version is followed by a conversation in which Brian gives a very full account of Episode 2.

**1973 Version:** In Episode 2 Oisean does not specify that his wife should not give the first puppy away. Instead, he only says that she should put a string around the first puppy's neck.

**1995 Version:** In Episode 3, details of Oisean's meeting with Patrick and dictating stories to him are condensed.

### **The Episode Charts as a Point of Departure: Stability and Variation**

Having subjected the stories to this form of structural analysis and arranged this information in graphic form, a detailed comparison of the story versions to one another is now possible. In terms of the basic skeletal structure of the stories, the episode charts make clear what one might already suspect: story structure is very stable across the entire selection of stories. An examination of the charts reveals that 29 of the total 39 story versions plotted maintain the same skeletal structure as the simplified plot summaries -- in other words, all of these versions contain all of the episodes listed in the simplified plot summaries, and these episodes always occur in the same order. For the other ten story versions plotted, skeletal structure is also relatively stable, with *most* of the structure resembling the simplified plot summaries. Looked at in terms of individual story groups, the stability of the stories is also evident: in four out of nine of the story groups, *all* of the plotted versions of the story match the simplified summary (and thus match each other), meaning that all of the recorded versions of a story maintain the same episodic structure and order. This stability and identity of structure is highly significant, as it strongly indicates that the basic *form* of the story is fixed in Brian Stewart's mind.

However, the true significance of the simplified plot summaries and episode charts does not lie in their ability to demonstrate that the structure of the stories is stable across versions: stability of story structures is already implicit in the fact that it has been possible to construct simplified plot summaries in the first place. Rather, the value of the simplified plot summaries and episode charts is that they represent a way of comparing the individual versions to a kind of constructed oecotype of the story in order to see what *variations*, if any, occur in each version at the structural level, as well as a way in which to compare the story versions *to each other* in graphic form, so that larger patterns of structure in Brian's storytelling can be more easily discerned and discussed. While the high degree of similarity of structure is very important, it is from a consideration of the differences between the story versions that we can learn the most. Thus when we see that two versions are nearly identical except in respect of one feature, it is through the investigation of just such a feature that we may come upon an important aspect of Brian's storytelling dynamic. I am here reminded of Alan Bruford's comparison of six versions of a story collected from the South Uist storyteller Duncan MacDonald. After considering five categories of variations which occur between the versions, Bruford remarks that he has "not produced examples of the most remarkable feature, that for the most part all six texts are almost identical" (1978: 33) and goes on to say that "it is easier to study the differences because they

are only a small part of the whole." Here, too, the discussion of variation between Brian's versions is to be seen against a backdrop of overall stability.

### **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STORY VERSIONS**

There are several types of variation which occur between versions of the same story. By examining each type of variation in turn, along with detailed examples of such variation from specific story versions, we will be able to identify important aspects of Brian's storytelling and to discuss his storytelling dynamic with greater precision.

#### **Optional Repeat Episodes**

"Optional repeat" is a term which I use to refer to episodes which basically repeat the action of a previous episode, and which seem to be used by the storyteller in order to lengthen the story and to enable him to give it more colour and detail. For instance, an episode may occur in which a hero visits a castle and slays a giant, and a repeat episode would consist of a following episode in which the hero visits a second castle and slays a second giant, going through the same series of events as in the first episode. These episodes may vary slightly from each other in terms of dialogue or details of characterisation (the second giant may have two heads, the second castle may be silver whereas the first was copper, and so on), but the "optional repeat" episode is basically a repetition or expansion of what has already occurred in the first episode. As Alan Bruford notes, such repetition of a slightly altered motif is a common practice amongst storytellers, for it is "the simplest way to get the maximum effect out of a motif ... and it is little harder to remember how to tell an episode three times than how to tell it once" (1969: 210).

#### ***Example: Stòiridh a' Chòcaire***

Such optional repeat episodes occur in both *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* and *Stòiridh Ladhair*. In the 1993 and 1995 versions of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, Episode 3, which is an optional repeat episode, is not included in the story. This story begins with Episode 1, in which the hero and the story setting are introduced, and in Episode 2 the hero saves a princess by killing a giant. Episode 3 consists of the hero's returning to the princess the next day and killing a second giant, this time one with two heads. As mentioned, the 1993 and 1995 versions do not contain this episode. Although one may initially conclude that because of this omission the structure of the 1993 and 1995 versions differ from the 1973 and 1974 versions, an understanding of the function of an optional repeat episode makes it clear that the non-appearance of such an episode does not in any way affect the logic and basic integrity of a story. Instead,



it represents the expansion of a motif, and as such represents one way in which the storyteller can lengthen or shorten a story at will. As the omission of such a repeat episode does not affect the integrity of the story's structure, it stands to reason that the storyteller who has not included such an episode in a particular telling will not have a sense that he has made a "mistake" (as storytellers often feel when omitting other kinds of episodes, which will be discussed below) or that he has left anything out. Looking at the function of this kind of episode in a story thus allows us insight into the way in which the storyteller views the story: whether consciously or otherwise, the "repetition" or "expansion" of an episode (or of an episode-long motif) is an *option* which is available to him, and which he can use in order to manipulate the story and the storytelling. Thus it is telling that on the occasions of narrating *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* in the 1970's -- occasions when Brian was younger and was telling stories in his own home besides his own fire to an audience which consisted of men only twenty years younger than himself who were fluent Gaelic speakers and well-versed in traditional tales -- on both these occasions he included the optional repeat Episode 3. However, on both the occasions that he told the stories to me -- at a time when he was an elderly man in a nursing home, worried perhaps about being interrupted by nursing staff or other intruders, telling stories to a woman 55 years younger than himself who was from another country and therefore clearly not someone whom he would expect to have a full appreciation of traditional idiom and nuance -- on these occasions he shortened his story, omitting the optional Episode 3 which certainly adds detail to the story, but which does not in any way change the logic or basic pattern of the story. Thus the context of storytelling and the identity of the storyteller's audience may affect the length and quality of the storyteller's performance. In any case, it is true that Brian shortened the story by omitting the optional episode when telling it to me, and *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* is thus an excellent example of the way in which the storyteller can condense the story in this way while retaining the basic skeleton of the story. Thus, while the 1973 and 1974 versions are fuller than the 1993 and 1995 versions, the overall pattern remains the same and listeners of any of the versions could summarise them all in much the same way. Besides for illustrating the way in which an optional repeat episode works, this also points again to the conclusion that the basic form of the story is fixed in the storyteller's mind, and that it is this form -- probably internalised both consciously and otherwise through the learning process -- which creates the parameters within which the storyteller must keep his story.



### *Example: Stòiridh Ladhair*

The 1995 version of *Stòiridh Ladhair* is another example of how an optional repeat episode works. In this case, the story concerns a young king who plays cards with an otherworldly woman, and the prizes which he demands from the woman when he wins.<sup>14</sup> In Episode 2 of the story the king wins at cards and asks for his choice of wife as a prize; he is given a wide selection of women from which to choose and, seeing that one of them is being mistreated by the others, he chooses her for his wife. In the third episode, the king again wins at cards and this time asks for his choice of horse as a prize. In an incident highly similar to that which occurs in the second episode, he chooses from a wide selection of horses, again picking one who is being mistreated by the others. Interestingly, as the order of these episodes makes no difference to the logical progression of the story, the order is variable in the four recorded versions of the story. In 1974, the king first chooses a horse in Episode 2, then a wife in the third episode of the story, whereas in the 1978 version he asks for a wife (Episode 2) and then a horse (Episode 3). The 1994 version again has the king asking for a wife first (Episode 2), followed by a horse (Episode 3), and then in 1995 we have an instance in which only one of these episodes is present, that in which he asks only for a horse (Episode 2). Thus while the 1995 version provides another instance in which the storyteller chooses not to include an "optional repeat" episode, an examination of the other versions strengthens the impression that these episodes are interchangeable, and that to the storyteller they represent a way in which details can be added to the story, rather than components of the story which must always be told in a certain order. It is possible that when he told the story to me in 1995, Brian was aware of the fact that he could have included another episode in which the king gained a wife, but that in the interest of brevity he did not bother to do so. (It is equally possible that such a decision was made on a more instinctive level, rather than representing a deliberate decision on Brian's part). It is in this sense that such episodes are "optional repeats": the storyteller knows that the sense and logical integrity of the story will not be damaged if they are not included.<sup>15</sup> Of course, this does not mean that the quality and balance of the story are not affected when it is shortened in this way. In *Stòiridh Ladhair*, for example, after the king wins a horse

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<sup>14</sup>A motif which, according to Bruford (1969: 80), is an old one, found in the fifteenth century *Eachtra Airt Meic Cuind agus Tochmarc Delbchàime Inge Morgáin* and in the Old Irish *Tochmarc Etaíne* (in these instances it is *fidchell*, rather than cards or dice, which the characters play); Bruford also calls attention to more examples of the motif listed under AT 556B in Ó Súilleabháin and Christiansen 1963.

<sup>15</sup>Whether the storyteller knows this on an instinctive level or on a more fully articulated level is another matter; I would imagine that the answer to this question would differ from one storyteller to another, and indeed from one storytelling occasion to another.

and wife, he loses a game of dice and the otherworldly woman names a difficult quest as her prize. The fact that in the "expanded" versions the king wins twice before losing at dice certainly contributes to the pacing of the story and sets up a greater sense of suspense: after the king wins twice at cards, there is a growing sense that his luck cannot hold and that some sort of disaster is looming. This is further emphasised by warnings from the king's companion (the eponymous *Ladhar*) as well as from his newly won wife not to play games with the otherworldly woman. By contrast, in the version in which there is only one game of cards preceding the disastrous game of dice, the storyteller does not create as much suspense, and the overall quality of the story suffers as a result. This points to the conclusion that the "expandable" and repeatable nature of episodes and motifs in these stories serves a dual role: while it allows the storyteller to control his material and manipulate the overall length of the story, it also functions as a narrative device which serves to create tension and a sense of involvement with the story. Thus if we consider Bruford's discussion of this feature (1969: 210 ff. and 222, note 2), it is reasonable to agree with his conclusion that its development and popularity is indeed related to the ease with which a motif can be repeated in a slightly altered form. However, once this device developed, it must have been clear to storyteller and listener alike that such repetition and alteration were not only easily deployable, but also made for a better story (as illustrated in Brian's versions) and thus the technique would have been reinforced for this additional reason. Hence we get an inkling of the complex role which oral delivery may play in the development of a narrative aesthetic. In terms of Brian's versions of *Stòiridh Ladhair*, it is clear that while the shorter versions of the story can be said to be "identical" to the longer versions in terms of *basic* plot structure, they are not equal to the longer versions in terms of the "quality" (in all senses of the word) of the storytelling, and the impression which the storyteller makes with the shorter version is thus not identical to that of the longer versions.

It is interesting to note that of all the stories in our selection, the omission of optional repeat episodes only occurs in *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* and *Stòiridh Ladhair*. Looking at the other seven stories under consideration, it is clear why this is the case: none of the other stories contain episodes which could be considered to be eligible for "optional repeat" treatment, i.e., they do not contain episodes which could be either repeated or omitted without damaging the logic of the story. Thus it is significant that in the only two stories which contain such an expandable episode (which, in fact, we may consider a motif, or perhaps an episode-long motif), the only instances of the repeat episode *not* being repeated occur in the later recordings of the 1990's, the period

during which I recorded from Brian while he was resident in a nursing home. This gives weight to my earlier supposition that the omissions were made in the interest of brevity, and that they may also represent the behaviour of a storyteller no longer at the height of his narrative (and physical) powers, telling stories in an artificial context which would not elicit his best performance.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the fact that Brian did in fact include all the "optional extras" when he was younger may indicate a belief on his part that inclusion of these repeat episodes does in fact make for a better story. The omission of optional repeats may thus be traced to a number of possible causes: conscious manipulation of the story by the storyteller; the storyteller's response to audience (or lack thereof) or to an artificial and less than inspiring context; the effects of age on memory; or indeed to a combination of all these factors.

It is worth noting that of the seven stories which do not contain expandable *episodes*, some of these do contain expandable information (motifs, details) *within* episodes, and that similar patterns of omission of repeatable information within episodes are to be discussed below. *Stòiridh Loircein* does in fact contain a central episode in which Loircean visits three castles and slays a giant in each one of them, and had the episodic breakdown of the story been arranged differently, the story might have been a candidate for the above discussion of stories with optional repeat episodes. However, I believe that the visiting of the castles more properly represents a motif which operates *within* one episode -- especially as the existence of the *three* castles is important to the story and is not an optional detail -- and the discussion of this feature therefore belongs with the discussion of motif expansion within episodes. This does, however, point to the difficulty of dividing stories into constituent episodes, and reflects the fact that the distinction between motif and episode is often blurred.<sup>17</sup>

### **Confusion of Parallel Episodes**

Whereas the omission of "optional repeat" episodes indicates a case in which the storyteller is in control of the story and makes a decision (conscious or otherwise) as

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<sup>16</sup>Similarly, Barbara McDermitt notes her astonishment at the effect which the presence of a large audience had on Ray Hicks's storytelling. While the recordings made with only a few people present were "good tellings" which were highly similar to one another, it was not until McDermitt heard him at the Jonesboro Storytelling Festival that she realised she "had not heard Ray at his best" and was "amazed at his creative handling of the story" (1986: 339-340).

<sup>17</sup>See Bruford (1969: i) where he, too, points out the difficulty of distinguishing between motif and episode, saying that "...the term ['motif'] overlaps with 'episode' on one side and 'detail' on the other...."

to whether to include optional information or to condense the story by omitting repetitions, other instances of omission are indicative of a different dynamic.

Somewhat similar to the optional repeat episodes are what I call "parallel episodes," consecutive episodes in which the action of each episode is of a similar nature. For instance, a hero may go on a quest for different objects in subsequent episodes, perhaps involving different characters and different locations in each episode. Such episodes are not repeats of each other, as the content of the episodes may differ substantially from each other.<sup>18</sup> However, the fact that the episodes are analogous to one another, often highly so, means that their telling represents a potential area of confusion for the storyteller, with the possibility that he will either confuse the contents of the parallel episodes, or tell them in the wrong order ("wrong" being an order which violates the logical integrity of the story, a concept which will be discussed in greater detail below).

***Example: Am Bodach Baigeir***

We have an example of the confusion of parallel episodes in the May 1974 version of *Am Bodach Baigeir* (Linguistic Survey Tape 954) recorded by David Clement. This story begins when, in the first episode, a passing beggar predicts that although a certain king's two sons are fond of each other, one of them will eventually kill the other. In the second episode, one of the brothers leaves the kingdom in order to prove the beggar wrong, leaving behind an imprint of his palm on a pillar which will turn red if he is ever to be killed. In the third episode, we follow the brother who leaves to another kingdom where he settles and marries. One night he is lured into chasing a fox who leads him to a house where he passes the night. Here he fights with an evil hag who disables his animal helpers (a horse, hound and hawk who were born the same night as he) by tying them up with a piece of magical hair from her body, and then eventually kills him. In Episode 4, the second brother learns of the first brother's death when the magical palm-print turns red, and he sets out to discover his brother's fate. He reaches his brother's home, and because he looks so much like the first brother, his brother's wife does not realise that he is not her own husband. At this point, the episode unfolds in an extremely similar fashion to Episode 3: the same fox lures the second brother away, and the brother eventually meets the same hag who killed his brother. Similar dialogue and descriptive details are used, which make the episodes even more alike. In fact, the degree of repetition is so great that one would

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<sup>18</sup>This may be what Bruford has in mind when he cites Aarne's conception of "... the possibility of one episode of a story being modelled on another, without being an exact or close repetition" (1969: 211).



be tempted to call this a repeat episode if it were not for the existence of two key details which cause the episode to develop differently from the first episode.<sup>19</sup> First, before lying down in bed with his brother's wife, the second brother places a sword between himself and his sister-in-law; and second, when the second brother meets the evil hag, he does not allow her to disable his animal helpers by tying them with her hair, but instead ties them with a piece of rope, thus enabling them to help him to overcome the hag when he calls for their help and to discover the location of his brother's body before finally killing the hag.

It should be clear that although Episodes 3 and 4 are highly similar to each other, there are key differences between them, and it is crucial to the story that Episode 3 be told before Episode 4. In fact, the storyteller cannot logically tell Episode 4 before telling Episode 3, because the fact that the second brother does not fall for the hag's trick (i.e., he does not use her hair to tie his animals) will have no significance, and his quest for his brother's killer will also be meaningless. This might seem an obvious point to make, but in actuality Brian does in fact make this mistake of telling Episode 4 first. In the May 1974 version he first tells Episodes 1 and 2, relating how the first brother leaves his father's kingdom in order to prove the beggar wrong. However, instead of then moving on to relate his adventures in the new kingdom, he dwells on the brother who stays at home and thus leads himself into relating the experiences of the second brother, which is really the content of Episode 4. In simple terms, Brian has skipped ahead of himself in the story. It is worth noting that the way in which Brian "leads himself astray," as it were, is by supplying information which usually leads seamlessly into Episode 4. Instead of proceeding directly to the adventures of the brother who leaves the kingdom, he tells us about the brother who stays behind:

Dh'fholbh e sin 's, och chaidh sin bliadhnaichean seachad. 'S bha a' bràthair 'tighinn h-uile madainn 's bha e 'toirt sùil air a' chlach 's. O bha 'bhois -- làrach a' bhois -- geal. Ach, aon madainn thàinig e mach, 's thug e sùil 's, chunnaic e, eh, làrach a' bhois dearg.

*[He [the first brother] left then and, och years went past. And his brother was coming every morning and looking at the stone and. Oh his palm was -- the mark [imprint] of his palm -- was white. But, one morning he came out, and he looked and, he saw, eh, the mark of the palm [was] red.]*

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<sup>19</sup>Still, it should be noted that the technique of repetition is very similar here, which again illustrates how successful and widespread this narrative device is in the traditional story.



Following this description of the second brother's discovery of his brother's death, Brian then describes how he sets out to avenge his brother -- naturally leading into the events of Episode 4. Thus by one wrong turning, Brian has departed from the correct run of the story. He gets through a good part of this episode, but when the second brother reaches the house where he is to fight the hag, Brian stops in mid-sentence and, interrupting himself in English, says "Oh, I'm sorry." The tape is then paused and resumes with a re-telling of the story from the beginning of Episode 1. Although there is no recording of the intervening conversation which passed between Brian Stewart and the collector David Clement, it is clear enough what happened: Brian mistakenly omitted the contents of Episode 3, realised his mistake when he got further along in the story, and requested that he be allowed to re-tell the story from the beginning. Interestingly, in the re-told version which follows, Brian almost makes the same mistake again: once he has told how the first brother leaves the mark of his palm on the pillar and sets off, he again relates how the second brother learns of his death:

Nis, bha 'bhràthair 'sealltainn air, [cho luath 's a] dh'èirich e 'sa mhadainn bha e 'dol mach a shealltainn air a' gheat, bha a' bhois geal. Ach aon de na lathaichean thàinig e mach 's, bha a' bhois dearg. O, ruith e staigh gu 'athair 's thuirt e ri 'athair, "Tha mo bhràthair marbh."

"Ciamar tha fhios a'ad?" thuirt 'athair ris, a' rìgh ris.

"O," thuirt e, "tha làrach a' bhois dearg, agus, tha mis' 'dol a dh'fholbh," thuirt e "gus am faic mi dè dh'èirich dha."

*[Now, his brother was looking at it [as soon as] he got up in the morning he was going out to look at the gate, and his palm[-print] was white. But one of the days he came out and, his palm[-print] was red. Oh, he ran in to his father and he said to his father, "My brother is dead."*

*"How do you know?" said his father to him, the king to him.*

*"Oh," he said, "the mark of his palm is red, and, I am going to set off," said he, "to see what happened to him."]*

At this point, however, instead of repeating his mistake by continuing with the second brother's actions, Brian regains the proper thread of the story by returning (somewhat abruptly, it must be said) to the action of the first brother with the following phrase:

Agus nis, dar a dh'fholbh a bhràthair, bha e air oighreachd rìgh eil' ann a' sin agus phòs e, 's bha bean aige fhèin a' sin.

[And now, when his brother left, he was on the estate of another king there and he married, and he had a wife of his own there.]

There are several points to be made here about Brian's confusion of Episodes 3 and 4 in the May 1974 version of *Am Bodach Baigeir*. First, as part of our discussion of parallel episodes, it is worthwhile to point out how easy it is for Brian to take the "wrong turning" into Episode 4 instead of proceeding with Episode 3. Not only does he make the mistake once in this May 1974 version, but he almost makes it twice, even when he has made a visitor from the School of Scottish Studies turn off his tape recorder and re-record the story from the beginning. One would think that these circumstances would be reminder enough to tell the story correctly on the second attempt, and thus we see that such a mistake is very easy to make, especially when the storyteller is dealing with highly similar episodes. (In fact, in Brian's 1993 version of the story, an extremely condensed telling, he again confuses the two episodes, and again corrects himself and clarifies the details). Perhaps it is the case that the storyteller's memory is such that certain episodes are triggered by phrases or events, or by certain familiar paths of thought. So it is, for instance, that once Brian starts down the path of describing the brother who is left behind, his memory may to a certain extent be on "automatic": he will naturally proceed to Episode 4 if he starts to tell about the brother who stayed at home. It is interesting to compare this example to the description which Donatien Laurent gives of the Breton storyteller Jean-Louis Rolland (1983: 112-113):

He [le Rolland] sees each tale as a sort of journey, following the hero ... in a sort of circuit which you have to go over 'being careful not to take the wrong road, without going too fast for fear of running past some turnings' as he says himself.

This is indeed reminiscent of the sense one gets that Brian has made a "wrong turning" from Episode 2 to Episode 4 in the May 1974 telling of *Am Bodach Baigeir*. Even more striking, and of direct relevance to our discussion of parallel episodes, is le Rolland's own comment that

It is difficult to keep them [i.e., stories] properly in mind because a lot of them are similar and you easily fall from one to the other -- it is the same turnings, the same ways round and finally you cannot find them out.... [But] each tale must follow its own track.... (113).

While le Rolland is here discussing similar stories, such comments could just as easily apply to similar episodes, and they reinforce the above points as to the easy confusion of parallel episodes, especially when they are highly analogous to one another. Of interest also is the fact that like Brian, le Rolland implies that there is a correct way to tell each story -- "each story must follow its own track."

Seeing how and why such a mistake is made, we can say with confidence that such an instance is clearly distinct from the omission of an optional repeat episode. Here the storyteller has not tried to shorten or otherwise manipulate his story, but has in fact erred. This is illustrated most clearly by the fact that Brian interrupts and corrects himself -- one of several instances of self-correction which occur throughout the repertoire. This idea that the storyteller has made a mistake and is clearly aware of it is very significant to our investigation of how the storyteller understands his own storytelling. Together with Brian's comments discussed in Chapter Three in which he states that he repeated stories back to his grandmother and was corrected by her if he did not tell them in the proper way --

Oh yes, I, sometimes I repeated them back [...] to see if I would have them all, you know. And, if I hadn't got them all, you see, she would say, "Oh, you missed this bit out of that."<sup>20</sup>

-- we get a very clear sense that Brian does indeed believe that there is a fixed form which the story must follow, and that he is willing to correct himself if he realises that he has strayed from the fixed path. More than this, we begin to get an idea that the storyteller is distinctly conscious of this principle of fixity -- that the story can be "wrong" or "right" -- and that the process of internalising this principle may have occurred in boyhood not only on an intuitive level, but perhaps at the level of articulated thought as well. *The first brother's adventures must be told before the second; the story does not work if we do not know what happens to the first brother* - - could such thoughts as these have crossed the storyteller's mind when, after being corrected by his grandmother as a boy, he went home to bed to consider the shapes of the stories he had learned that night?<sup>21</sup> While we may never identify a point at which a storyteller consciously articulated such rules to him or herself, both Brian's comments and the evidence provided by such self-correction as in the May 1974 version of *Am Bodach Baigeir* clearly support the conclusion that Brian is aware of

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<sup>20</sup>31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2.

<sup>21</sup>See the description of le Rolland going over a tale all night after hearing it, "keeping it running in his mind trying to reconstruct it" in Laurent 1983: 113.

the correct running order of a story and of the principle that this order should not be violated. The fact that he is willing to admit his mistake and to correct himself -- even when being recorded (or perhaps *especially* when being recorded, for on such an occasion the storyteller is telling the story for posterity, and it is therefore particularly important to get the story right) proves just how important this principle is. Such self-correction is not unusual -- according to Bruford (1983: 108) "Any good storyteller who realises that he has forgotten to account for what is happening in his story will go back and make good the omission" -- and will be explored in greater depth in a separate section below.

### **Omission of Logical Links**

#### ***Example: Am Bodach Baigeir***

In addition to the strong indication that the storyteller is conscious of the importance of the fixedness of the story's structure, the study of the confused episodes in the May 1974 recording of *Am Bodach Baigeir* points to another significant aspect of the storytelling dynamic: the importance that the *logic* of the story plays in keeping the storyteller running along the right lines. As I have already pointed out, in the *Bodach Baigeir* logic dictates that Episode 3 must be told before Episode 4 in order for the story to make sense: we must know how the first brother is tricked and killed by the hag in order to appreciate the second brother's evasion of the hag's tactics, and the first brother must be killed in order to set the second brother after him in the first place. When the second brother is about to kill the hag, he asks her to tell him where his brother's body is: if Episode 3 has not already taken place, none of this makes any sense to the listener. There is, in fact, a logical "programme" which underlies many Gaelic stories and which dictates the path which the story must take. Often there are events or details -- "logical links" -- which occur early in a story to which the storyteller must return later in order to continue the story, and in this way these links "preserve" themselves (and the stories) in the storyteller's memory.<sup>22</sup> Thus it is that when Brian mistakenly relates the adventures of the second brother before relating the fate of the first brother, he comes to the point in the story at which the second brother is going to encounter the hag and he suddenly realises that he has forgotten to tell about the first brother. He cannot, in fact, logically continue to tell the story without correcting himself, and so he interrupts himself and tells the story from the beginning -- this time including the material omitted in his first attempt. Here it is not simply Brian's memory which has caused him to realise that he has forgotten to

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<sup>22</sup>Bruford (1969, 1983) uses the term "logical link" in a similar way. Propp is also concerned with the logic of the folktale; see in particular 1968 [1958]: 92-117.



include parts of the story: rather it is the logic of the story itself which will not allow him to tell the story in any form other than one which includes all the vital "link" information. Thus we see how the logic of the story functions to preserve the story itself. Just as a series of statements or equations in a geometrical proof must follow one another in a certain order, so the story unfolds according to its logical plan. If one key link is left out, the story begins to unravel, and it comes grinding to a halt when the storyteller arrives at the point at which he has to pick up the piece of information which he has inadvertently omitted. Here he is faced with two choices: either to correct himself by stating that he has made a mistake and then back-tracking to the point of error and re-tracing the path of the story in the correct way; or to proceed with the story without articulating the error, supplying the bit of necessary information at some convenient point, usually with the result that the story loses some of its coherence. As we have already seen, in the May 1974 version of *Am Bodach Baigeir* (as well as the 1993 version -- see the text of the story in Appendix B for full details) Brian provides an example of the first option: he corrects himself by re-telling the story from the beginning, and in so doing gives us an excellent example of how the logic of the story acts as a prod to memory correcting the storyteller even when his own memory fails him.

Alan Bruford in fact alludes to the importance of the "logical link" in both his 1969 Gaelic Folk-Tales and Mediaeval Romances (especially in Chapter 19, "Re-Shaping of Stories") and his article "Memory, Performance and Structure in Traditional Tales", and points to its significance when he says that, in trying to understand how storytelling works "... we would be wiser to pay more attention to the bricks themselves [i.e., the components of the story] and the mortar which binds them together and less to the large-scale architecture" (1983: 107). He then goes on to describe the way in which stories can be pre-programmed, saying "The mortar of the story has to be a logical link. If the episodes are keyed together so that no other can follow the last, no mortar is needed, like a drystone wall" (1983: 107).

Kevin O' Nolan (1987: 480) also discusses the logical necessity which often drives the traditional story forward along an inevitable path: "It is the rule in oral narrative that action to come is in some way programmed in advance, otherwise the audience is lost." He goes on to compare two versions of a story recorded from Éamon Búrc, the Connemara storyteller, showing how the omission of a specific link detail can, in O' Nolan's words, prove to be a "fatal flaw" (481) in the narration of the story. The really interesting point to be made about O' Nolan's discussion is that after drawing



our attention to the programmed logic of a story, he ends this section of his article with the following words:

From a comparison of these versions we may conclude perhaps that the activities of the hero which are enshrined in fixed formulae are not in themselves enough to sustain a tale, a conclusion which indeed might have been assumed from the very nature of formulae and their transferability from tale to tale. But this conclusion entails another conclusion: that however much these elaborate 'runs' may have helped the storyteller to remember a tale, *he must also have had some additional aid to hold in mind or recall a synopsis of a tale* (482, emphasis mine).

Here O' Nolan leaves the argument, without answering the question thus raised of *what* the "additional aid" to remembering the synopsis of a tale must be. It seems clear to me that the aid -- at least in part -- is the very logic behind the story which both pre-programmes it and binds it together. In the example of the *Bodach Baigeir* above we saw how it was the *logic* of the story which made it impossible for Brian to continue along the incorrect path of his wrong turning, and which thus caused him to realise and correct his mistake when he could go no further.

***Example: Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'***

The 1993 and 1995 versions of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* provide us with additional examples of how the logic and links of the story work to maintain the shape of the story and to ensure that at least some aspects of the story's structure remain stable over time.<sup>23</sup> In both these examples, a crucial logical link is again left out, but on these occasions Brian does not realise his mistake until much later in the story. Instead of re-starting the story from the beginning (as he does in his telling of *Am Bodach Baigeir*), in *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* he simply supplies the crucial piece of missing information when he realises that he cannot continue without it, resulting in somewhat disjointed tellings of the story. While the option which Brian chooses is thus different to that chosen with *Am Bodach Baigeir*, these examples serve as an excellent illustration of how "logical links" work, as a close examination of what happens in the 1993 and 1995 versions of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* will demonstrate.

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<sup>23</sup>In this sense, the logical links which "programme" the story and thus serve to maintain the story's shape, are analogous to the metrical requirements which help to maintain the shape of formulaic epithets in traditional poetry or sung epic.

*Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* begins when, in Episode 1, a black crow arrives on a stormy night asking for shelter from Oisean and his brothers. The brothers turn the creature away, but Oisean allows her into his bothy. When he wakes, the crow has turned into a beautiful woman; she says that she will be Oisean's wife as long as he lives, on the condition that he never mentions the form in which she first came to him (i.e., as an ugly crow). Oisean agrees to this and the story proceeds. Oisean has a greyhound bitch which is about to give birth, and in Episode 2 he instructs his wife not to give the first puppy of the brood away if anyone should ask for it. His wife agrees but while Oisean is out hunting she is tricked by a stranger who comes to the door and is forced to give the puppy away. When Oisean returns and learns what his wife has done, he grows angry and calls her an "ugly crow" (*fheannag ghràinnd*), whereupon his wife turns back into a crow and flies away. Oisean gives chase but cannot catch the bird. Finally, the crow waits for Oisean, and tells him that she can never be his wife again. However, she gives him a gold ring and tells Oisean that as long as he wears it on his finger he will live, but if he removes it, he will die. This episode is followed by Oisean's return to his home, where he finds his bothy and his brothers gone, and in their place the house of "*Para Naona Cleireach*," who is presumably St. Patrick.<sup>24</sup> Oisean is now old and blind, the unstated implication being that he has been away chasing the crow for many years, and is only still alive because of the magical life-prolonging ring. The story proceeds with Episodes 3 and 4, which are detailed episodes involving Oisean's returns to the realm of the *Fèinn* (the Fenians), where he kills and eats huge deer and brings back the shank-bone of an enormous baby blackbird in order to prove to Patrick that animals were gigantic in the time of the *Fèinn*. Finally, the story comes to a conclusion when a servant boy takes the now elderly and blind Oisean out to a stream in order to bathe him and while so doing removes the golden ring from Oisean's finger and puts it on a rock. A crow immediately swoops down and takes the ring away, and Oisean dies shortly thereafter.

In the 1993 and 1995 versions of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'*, Brian leaves out Episode 2, the episode of the puppy which includes Oisean's breaking of his promise not to call his wife a crow and which ends with Oisean's wife giving him the magical golden ring and flying away in the form of a bird. Instead of including this episode,

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<sup>24</sup>Brian's pronunciation of this character's name is somewhat unstable, and he himself does not understand him to be St. Patrick. However, the character as he is usually found in this story is indeed St. Patrick, and the name "*Para Naona Cleireach*" leaves little doubt that it derives from something such as "the saintly clergyman Patrick".

Brian moves directly to Episodes 3 and 4 -- in one sense the main episodes of the story of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinni* -- but when he reaches the final episode, he runs into difficulty: he has forgotten to mention the magical ring, which is the "logical link" detail of the story, and because of this he literally cannot finish the story. Thus, whether or not the storyteller has remembered to tell about the ring earlier on, he is inevitably reminded of this crucial detail as he nears the story's end: the boy *must* take the ring off Oisean's finger, and the crow *must* swoop down and take the ring away. Either the storyteller must correct himself by pointing out his mistake and re-telling the story in full from Episode 2, or he must insert the vital information -- explain how Oisean got the ring and why he must not remove it -- at this point in the story. Either way, the information must be included or the ending of the story -- including the reason for Oisean's death -- will not make any sense. In the 1993 and 1995 versions, rather than re-telling the story from Episode 2, Brian chooses the second option of inserting the necessary information at the point at which he remembers it.

In the 1993 version, as he is nearing the end of Episode 4 and telling how Oisean and his servant boy are returning to Patrick's house, Brian suddenly inserts the information about the golden ring into the story as follows:

Agus. Thuir an fheannag ri Oisean, thug i, thug, thug, thug an fheannag fàinne a dh'Oisean. 'S thuir i ris, "Fhad 's a bhios sin air do chorrach, bios thu beò. Ach ma thig e dhiot, bios thu marbh."

[*And. The crow said to Oisean, she gave, she gave, gave, gave the crow gave a ring to Oisean. And she said to him, "As long as that is on your finger, you'll be alive. But if you take it off, you'll be dead."*]

After this the crow goes on to explain to Oisean that she cannot stay with him because he went back on his word by calling her a black crow, after which Oisean apologises ("Och, uill," thuir Oisean, "tha mi duilich gun do thi-- gun tuirt mi riut, eh." ["*Och, well,*" said Oisean, "*I'm sorry that I cast -- that I said [that] to you, eh.*"]) and the crow leaves. The vital information thus imperfectly and somewhat confusingly delivered, Brian then proceeds with the final elements of Episode 4 and then onto Episode 5, in which he may now kill off Oisean by removing the golden ring. In the 1995 version the forgotten link is mentioned in much the same way, inserted with no transition or explanation at the very end of Episode 4, after which Brian ends the story with the final Episode 5. Thus we see that when the element of

the ring is not included at the beginning of the story, the tight weave of the story's logic unravels and we are left with a less coherent story. However, the link cannot be completely forgotten, and the storyteller is forced to include the information in order to conclude the story. Again this shows us how the logic of the story can maintain the integrity of the story over time, and also the way in which the logical link keeps the storyteller's memory sharp: for even if the storyteller forgets the link elements, he is reminded of them at the necessary point in the story, and it is therefore likely that he will remember the link element -- and the right way to tell the story -- better the next time he tells the story.

### **Further Implications of Logical Links**

While it is clear that the logical link thus plays an important role in maintaining the fixed structure of a story, it is also the case that such logical links only occur in three out of nine of Brian's main stories (*Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* and *Am Bodach Baigeir* as told together with *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* -- discussed below). Thus while Bruford notes the "tendency also to knit the story together with small details" (1969: 236) and points out that "...a motif is more easily lost if it is not logically linked with the story in such a way that its disappearance will require other parts of the story to be changed" (1969: 230), it must be admitted that the other six stories in Brian's repertoire maintain a stable structure *without* link details, and we may wonder whether there is a reason for this difference. In fact, if we look at *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* and the *Bodach Baigeir* + *Còcaire* stories -- (*Am Bodach Baigeir* is used as a frame story for *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, as will be discussed below) -- there is a difference between these and the other stories in the repertoire: *Oisean as Dèidh na Fèinn'* and the *Am Bodach Baigeir* + *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* complex are both instances in which a frame story is linked to an inner story which can also be told as a story in its own right. Thus the link may be especially important and useful -- and more likely to occur -- when it is necessary to hold frame elements together in a complicated story complex.

### ***Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'***

*Oisean as Dèidh na Fèinn'*, for example, uses the story of the crow/wife and the golden ring to provide an explanation for how Oisean outlived the Fèinn, and the introduction and conclusion of the crow story neatly frame the central portion of the story concerned with Oisean's interaction with St. Patrick. Both Bruford (1987: 51 and following) and John Shaw (1998, forthcoming) point out that Brian's version, along with the versions recorded from his uncle, Ailidh Dall, and his cousin, Màiri



Stewart (Ailidh Dall's daughter), as well as an older version from Mull, differs from most other Scottish versions of this story in that the other versions do not explain Oisean's old age or include the story of the crow/wife, opening instead directly with the story of Oisean and Patrick. In other words, the versions from Brian's family and the older Mull version are the only ones which attach the frame story of the crow/wife to the story of Oisean and Patrick. In addition to this, both Bruford and Shaw point out that the association of the frame story with the central story of Oisean and Patrick, rather than being an innovation by the Stewarts, is probably an old one, as the earliest record of the story, a c. 1803 manuscript summary of a version from Mull possibly going back to the seventeenth century, also contains the detail of Oisean's ring, how he had been given it by "a fairy lover" ("*Leanna sith*" in the manuscript) and how the bird took it away from him while he was bathing.<sup>25</sup> In Shaw's words, the existence of this manuscript version confirms "[t]hat such associated traditions have had oral currency in Scotland for some time" (Shaw 1998).<sup>26</sup> Moreover, Shaw points out that Brian's version (along with the Mull version) is closely related to 19th and 20th century Irish story and ballad material concerned with Oisean's visit to the Otherworld some of which include the ring and bird details; and after adducing additional convincing evidence from the manuscript and oral traditions, he concludes that the story complex has probably existed in the oral tradition for a number of centuries.<sup>27</sup> Considering, then, that the frame story has a long association with the inner story, we can conjecture that one of the factors which preserved this structure intact in its transmission to Brian and his immediate family was the strong logical link detail of the magic ring. We have already seen in the 1993 and 1995 examples how the link acts as a powerful check against faulty memory, and perhaps this gives us a clue as to how this version, different from almost all other Scottish versions, managed to retain this complex structure and survive into Brian's repertoire. We can also guess at the way in which the other versions developed without the ring/crow frame: just as it is clear that the logical link can act to keep the frame and the inner story together, so too it is obvious that if a link detail is forgotten by the narrator, then both parts of the frame could easily be

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<sup>25</sup>See J.F. Campbell 1872: 38-39 for a copy of the twelve-line summary entitled "*Mar a chaill Oisín a Fainne*" ("How Oisín lost his Ring") and a longer summary of the entire story which includes the information that Oisean obtained the ring from a "fairy lover."

<sup>26</sup>This quote comes from page 5 of an unpublished manuscript of the forthcoming "The Loathly Lady among the Féinn and her North American Travels" which Dr. Shaw kindly allowed me to read; at the time of writing the present work, it was not possible to ascertain the page numbers for the article as it will appear when published.

<sup>27</sup>Shaw also notes Gerard Murphy's view that the story "merit[s] special attention as a fully developed tale"; see Murphy 1953: xix-xx.



lost from the story. Thus we have a possible explanation for the development of the versions which only tell of Oisean and Patrick's interaction. While it is clear that a logical link can be a powerful deterrent to the loss of episodes and the preservation of a convoluted structure -- especially when we are dealing with a complex of stories or with a story which frames another story -- it is equally clear that such a link can be lost, and that the parts of a story which can stand alone could easily continue to be told separately.

It is interesting to note that Stith Thompson (1946) discusses similar ideas about the development and diffusion of related versions of a story. In a chapter entitled "The Life History of a Folktale" in his longer work *The Folktale*, he summarises Walter Anderson's "conclusions on the nature of oral tradition," (436) explaining how elements of a story may change or be lost as follows:

*Formation of Special Redactions of a Tale.* The first time a change of detail is made in a story it is undoubtedly a mistake, an error of memory. But sometimes the change thus made is pleasing to the listeners and is repeated.... [It] replaces the original trait and hence the exception becomes the rule. A new form of the tale has thus arisen.... Often the old and new forms may live on side by side....

It may happen ... that one of these new forms may spread over the whole territory of the original tale and replace it.... [However] some vestiges of the original form of the tale will in all probability persist (437).

Here Anderson's ideas agree with the supposition expressed above that Brian's family's complex form of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* may well represent an earlier version before the ring-and-wife frame was lost from the story complex. Even more interesting is Anderson's speculation that:

They [i.e., vestiges of the original form of the tale] may be found ... in some of the earlier literary variants but even in the popular tradition they may have lived on.... [T]here is a good chance that versions close to the archetype may be found on the periphery of the area of total distribution. If these peripheral forms ... correspond to old literary versions, the case for their validity as older strata is strong (437-438).

Here Anderson describes exactly the situation of the Stewart family's version of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'*: Existing on the periphery of the Gaelic storytelling area (both physically and socially, as the travellers existed on the periphery of mainstream Gaelic culture), their version of the story shows close correspondences with older

versions (the Mull summary and the related story and ballad material collected in Ireland), making for a convincing argument that the ring-and-wife frame has been a part of the story complex in oral tradition for some time. Again, if the story complex has existed in this form for some time, the role of the logical link in aiding individual memory and preserving complex story structure can be seen to be an important one.

### ***Am Bodach Baigeir and Stòiridh a' Chòcaire***

As stated above, the only stories in Brian's repertoire which use frames are also the only stories in his repertoire which use logical links: *Oisean as Dèidh na Fèinn'* and the *Am Bodach Baigeir + Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* complex. *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* provided a good example of how a link kept a frame story and an inner story together; I shall now turn to the *Bodach Baigeir* and *Còcaire* stories for a much different example of the logical link in action. While the above discussion of *Am Bodach Baigeir* was concerned with the logic of the story and the way in which a story may be "pre-programmed" to run a certain course, this next section will deal with the links which connect *Am Bodach Baigeir* and *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*.

Although *Am Bodach Baigeir* and *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* have been discussed as separate stories thus far -- and are indeed usually told by Brian as separate stories -- the stories are connected and Brian has told them together, with *Am Bodach Baigeir* serving as a frame for *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*. In addition to this, Brian has stated unequivocally that the two stories do belong together. Thus we have an interesting example of the way in which two linked stories may also function independently of each other in a storyteller's repertoire, and an indication of the way in which such stories may have come apart over time and been transmitted as separate stories.

The way the two stories fit together is simple enough. First the beginning of *Am Bodach Baigeir* is told, detailing the beggar's prophecy that one of the brothers will kill the other and telling how the first brother sets off in order to prove the beggar wrong (Episodes 1 and 2). When the first brother sets off, however, instead of simply saying that he finds a new home and marries, Brian recounts the first brother's adventures and the way in which he finds his wife. The first brother is in fact the hero of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, and all of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* (AT 300 -- already discussed above in the section on optional repeat episodes) is here told. What happens is as follows: the boy comes to another kingdom and learns that a princess is under threat from some giants, but that the king's cook is going to save her from the giants and thus win her as his wife. In Episodes 2 and 3 (Episode 3 being the optional repeat

episode discussed above), the boy (our hero) finds the princess, who tells him that the giants are coming for her and that the man who is supposed to save her (the cook) is hiding up a tree. The boy says that he will try to help her, and promptly goes to sleep with his head in her lap. He tells her to wake him when the giants come by taking a snip out of his ear with a pair of scissors. The story continues with the boy killing first one giant and then another on successive days. On each occasion, the girl uses the scissors to wake the boy -- first to snip off the tip of his ear, the next day the tip of his finger, and finally to take some flesh out of his forehead.<sup>28</sup> Thus the motif is repeatable up to three times, with the episode being varied by waking the boy in a different way each time; also each giant is more fearsome than the previous one, with multiple heads and tongues, and so on. Each time the boy kills the giants, he cuts out and keeps their tongues and eyes, and then disappears. Meanwhile, the cook descends from the tree and takes the tongue-less and eye-less heads of the giants home to the king, thus "proving" that he has killed the giants. Moving on to Episode 4 of the story, the king holds a ball at which the princess organises a test of strength at which the cook fails miserably and which the boy from the *Bodach Baigeir* story wins. The princess then announces that the boy is the true hero, the boy produces the tongues and eyes of the giants as proof that he killed them, and the boy and girl marry and live happily ever after. This is the end of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* as Brian tells it, but it is also the point at which he can again take up the thread of *Am Bodach Baigeir*. The story proceeds with the boy and his new wife in bed on their wedding night, at which point the boy hears the sound of a fox outside the house and is lured away to fight and be killed by the hag who tricks him by tying his animal helpers with her hair. After this, the hero's brother learns of his death when the magical palm-print which the hero left behind as a life token turns red, and comes to avenge him, after which the story proceeds as has already been recounted above. However, there is one key detail in the final episode of *Am Bodach Baigeir* which links the two stories together, and which is worth noting: at the very end of the story, when the two brothers return home to the first brother's wife, the two brothers are so alike that the first brother's wife cannot tell the difference between the two. She asks them to put out their hands, and one of them is missing the tip of his little finger: this is her husband, whose little finger she cut in order to wake him to fight the giants in *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*. She thus recognises her husband and we have another example of how a link detail from one story connects it to the plot of another story -- and in this case, we also see how a

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<sup>28</sup>See Stith Thompson's motif type D1975 and following in Thompson 1955-58.

link detail can show that stories within a repertoire are definitely associated with each other.

The interesting point about Brian's treatment of these stories is that, as already stated, he usually tells them separately. There are a total of four recordings of *Am Bodach Baigeir*, three from the 1970s (two from 1974 and one from 1977), and one from 1993. None of the 1970s versions are told with *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*,<sup>29</sup> and in fact when Donald Archie MacDonald recorded the story from Brian in 1974 he asked Brian if the story was connected with *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, and Brian answered very emphatically that the two stories were not connected at all. Their conversation was as follows:

**DAM:** O 'se stòiridh mhath a tha sin. 'Se. 'Se stòiridh leis-fhèin, a bh'ann?

**B.S.:** Aye.

**DAM:** Robh a' stòiridh sin, robh i air leth leatha fhèin mar sin, air neo --. Tha mi 'smaoineachadh Ailidh, gu' robh e 'ga h-innse mar gum biodh còmhla ri, eh, cuide ri stòiridh a' Chòcaire, mar gum b'e 'cur an dà stòiridh an ceann a chèile.

**B.S.:** O, chan eil, 'se stòiridh leatha, leatha fhèin a bh'ann.

**DAM:** Stòiridh air leth leatha fhèin.

**B.S.:** O 'se, 'se, stòiridh leatha fhèin a bh'ann.

**DAM:** Tha mi 'tuigsinn. O uill, glè mhath.

**B.S.:** 'Se stòiridh leatha fhèin a bh'ann. Cha robh, cha robh, cha robh dad aig a' Chòcair' a dhèanamh leatha idir.

**DAM:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** Cha robh.

**DAM:** Glè mhath.<sup>30</sup>

[**DAM:** *Oh, that's a good story. Yes. It's a story by itself, was it?*]

**B.S.:** Aye.

**DAM:** *Was that story, was it completely on its own like that, or --. I think Ailidh, that he told it, as it were, together with, eh, together with Stòiridh a' Chòcaire, like he would put the two stories one after another.*

**B.S.:** *Oh, no, it was a story by -- by itself.*

**DAM:** *A completely separate story.*

**B.S.:** *Oh yes, yes, it was a completely separate story.*

**DAM:** *I understand. O well, very good.*

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<sup>29</sup>However, it should be pointed out that the November 1973 recording of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* runs out before the end of the story, and it is therefore impossible to know whether Brian on this occasion connected the end of the *Còcaire* story with the second half of the *Bodach Baigeir* story as a frame.

<sup>30</sup>From SA 1974/32/B1, conversation following a version of *Am Bodach Baigeir*.



**B.S.:** *It was a separate stoory. The Còcaire didn't, didn't, didn't have anything to do with it at all.*

**DAM:** *Uh huh.*

**B.S.:** *No.*

**DAM:** *Very good.]*

Here then we have Brian being asked directly whether or not the two stories are connected, and he clearly asserts that there is no connection between them. Moreover, he tells the story on its own again in 1977, and also tells *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* as a separate story in both 1973 and 1974, and it is not until his first telling of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* to me in 1993 that we get any idea that Brian does indeed think that the two stories are related to one another, for on this occasion he does connect the two stories. The framing of the *Còcaire* story by the *Bodach Baigeir* story is not perfectly executed, for instead of introducing the two brothers at the beginning of the story, Brian simply starts by telling *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*; however, when he comes to the point at which the boy marries the princess, he continues with the *Bodach Baigeir* story. At the time that Brian was telling the story to me, I had expected the story to finish with the last episode of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, for I had no idea that he would connect the two stories. Thus, thinking that the story was over, I commented that it was a good story. However, Brian continued with the story as follows:

**C.Z.:** *Bha sin math.*

**B.S.:** *Bha.*

**C.Z.:** *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire.*

**B.S.:** *'S an sin, am balach phòs nighean a' rìgh [pause] bha e fhèi' 's a' nighean, a' bhean aig', cuideachd 's, bha iad a' laighe oidhch' 's chual' e fuaim, 's thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Dè tha sin?" [Story continues.]<sup>31</sup>*

**[C.Z.:** *Well, that was good.*

**B.S.:** *Yes.*

**C.Z.:** *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire.*

**B.S.:** *And then, the boy who married the king's daughter [pause] himself and the girl, his wife, were together and, they were lying [i.e., in bed] one night and he heard a sound, and he said to the wife, "What's that?" [Story continues.]]*

After this, Brian continued with the rest of the *Bodach Baigeir* story, treating it as part of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*. This, then, was the first indication that Brian knew there

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<sup>31</sup>24 September 1993, Tape 1 of 1.



was a connection between the two stories. However, this 1993 linking of the two stories might have remained somewhat enigmatic if it were not for the fact that in a 1994 interview, Brian explicitly stated that the stories were indeed related, and went on to explain in detail how they were linked.<sup>32</sup>

During the interview, I started asking Brian questions about *Am Bodach Baigeir*, and Brian began to tell me the story in English (itself a very interesting occurrence, as the way in which Brian glosses and translates some of the story gives us a rare glimpse of how he thinks about (and perhaps visualises) the story). He begins as follows:

[*B.S. starts telling the story in English:*] Well, it's the king's, his two sons, that was playing together. And the *Bodach Baigeir* came as a tramp. And he passed them and the two boys was playing, you know. And he went up to the castle and he said to their mother, "Well," he says, "the two boys," he says, "they're very fond of one another. But," he says, "the one will kill the other one yet." And, she was first wanting to ... give him a hammering and put him away. But [on the other hand] she took him in and she gave him a, a feed of food. And then one of the boys was [passing them]. And they heard the tramp saying this. And then ... his brother was away, he was married.

*C.Z.:* When he went away, did he put something on the gate post?

*B.S.:* Yes. He took his palm of his hand, he put the -- [*B.S. makes a sound as if he is slapping his hand palm-down on something*] -- he left the mark of his hand on the gate post.

*C.Z.:* How did he put the mark of his hand on it?

*B.S.:* Well, it was soft cement, and he left the palm of his hand like this -- [*B.S. makes sound again as if he is demonstrating the action.*] --

*C.Z.:* Uh-huh.

*B.S.:* And he told his brother, "Now," he says, "look at that. As long as that's white," he says, "I'll be alive. But if it'll go red," he says, "I'll be dead."

*C.Z.:* Right.

*B.S.:* And his brother was coming out every day and looking at the gate post then. It was white. But one day he came out and it was red.

[*Some discussion follows about the phrase "làrach a' bhois" ("the mark of his palm") and there is an interruption when a nurse comes in with tea. The discussion of the story resumes with:*]

*C.Z.:* Uh huh, "*làrach a' bhois*". Uh huh. Right. So, *thug e sgailc air a' phillar, agus an uair sin bha làrach a' bhois air a' phillar*. ["So, he gave a knock to the pillar, and then the mark of his hand was on the pillar."] Uh huh.

*B.S.:* You know, that story --

*C.Z.:* Uh huh --

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<sup>32</sup>Unfortunately, this 1994 interview was the only occasion on which my tape recorder malfunctioned, and the result is that the recording is extremely garbled and at points impossible to make out. However, I did manage to salvage parts of the recording, and one can make out enough to understand what Brian said about the two stories.

**B.S.:** -- and uh ... the *Còcaire*, is connected.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh, how -- oh, oh, aye. Now how are they connected, is it because, when he goes off away, then he goes to the kingdom where the *Còcaire* is going to--

[Some important comments are completely unintelligible here due to the tape malfunction.]

**B.S.:** One of the brothers, was the man that killed the giants, you see?

**C.Z.:** Aye. So it's the same --

**B.S.:** Aye --

**C.Z.:** -- part of the same story?

**B.S.:** Aye.<sup>33</sup>

Following on these comments that the hero of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* is the same character as the brother from *Am Bodach Baigeir*, Brian volunteers to tell me the story. He continues with the *Bodach Baigeir* (in Gaelic), ending the story with yet another explanation of how the two stories fit together:

**B.S.:** Agus .... "*Cha do bhreugaich sinn am bodach baigeir.*" [...] They came home together, then. And that is how [...] connected with the *Còcaire*.

**C.Z.:** Aye, that's the end of the story.

**B.S.:** Remember [...] ... when he told the king's daughter to take the point of his little finger [...] with one bite of the scissor. [...] *Aon beum dhen t-siosar.* [...] *Nighean an rìgh* says, "I don't which is my husband." They were that alike. But she said, "Put out your hands," [...]. That's the end of it.

**C.Z.:** *Sin ceann na stòiridh.*

**B.S.:** That's how it was connected with the *Còcaire*.

[Conversation continues about some of the words in the story.]

[**B.S.:** Agus .... "*We didn't prove the old beggar man wrong.*" [...] They came home together, then. And that is how [...] connected with the *Còcaire*.

**C.Z.:** Aye, that's the end of the story.

**B.S.:** Remember [...] ... when he told the king's daughter to take the point of his little finger [...] with one bite of the scissor. [...] *One snip of the scissor.* [...] *Nighean an rìgh* says, "I don't which is my husband." They were that alike. But she said, "Put out your hands," [...]. That's the end of it.

**C.Z.:** That's the end of the story.

**B.S.:** That's how it was connected with the *Còcaire*.

[Conversation continues about some of the words in the story.]

Here then we have absolute confirmation that Brian knows that the stories are related. Moreover, not only does he know that the stories are linked, but he explains to us *how* the two are connected together, pointing to the important link detail of the

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<sup>33</sup>1 July 1994, Tape 1 of 1.

missing finger tip as the "proof" that the stories go together. This is extremely important, for here we have an instance of our storyteller explaining that he is aware of the mechanism which links a frame story with another story, and pointing out the logical link detail as that which establishes the connection. Thus this is not a case in which scholarly analysis of a traditional tale identifies a link mechanism, but rather a case of a tradition bearer telling us that the link really is important in helping him to remember a story.

As with *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'*, we might wonder how we can know that the two stories were linked together in oral tradition and therefore whether or not Brian would have heard them told together. Also as was the case with *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'*, there is strong evidence that the two stories have been associated with each other in the longer oral tradition. *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* conforms to international tale type AT 300, while *Am Bodach Baigeir* is a version of AT 303; these two tale types are often linked, not only in the Gaelic tradition but in other countries as well. Stith Thompson, in fact, in his 1946 treatment *The Folktale*, points to these two stories as a prime example of connected stories, saying that "it is necessary to study the two tales together if one is to secure an accurate picture of their mutual relationships, and of the history of the two stories, both when they are merged together and when they exist separately" (1946: 24). At the time that Thompson was writing, there had only been 10 versions of AT 303 ("The Blood Brothers," i.e., *Am Bodach Baigeir*) and four versions of AT 300 ("The Dragon Slayer," i.e., *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*) collected in Ireland, and only three versions of AT 303 and one version of AT 300 in Scotland. However, by the time *The Types of the Irish Folktale* was published by Seán Ó Suilleabhain and Reidar Th. Christiansen in 1963, there had been several *hundred* recordings of these tales told separately collected in Ireland, and 79 recordings of AT 300 and 303 told together. In Scotland, the School of Scottish Studies' Tale Archive today documents 21 collected versions of AT 300, 19 versions of AT 303, and only three recorded versions of the two stories told together. These last include versions from Brian's uncle Ailidh Dall, and from his second cousin, Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord. Together with Brian's combined version of the two stories as well as four versions collected in the last century, the total number of combined AT 300 + 303 versions collected in Scotland is eight.<sup>34</sup> While this total is not high, the distribution of the collected versions -- three from Sutherland, three from Mull, one

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<sup>34</sup>The four written versions are comprised of three summaries in the J.F. Campbell of Islay manuscript collection in the National Library of Scotland, and one story which appears in Campbell 1890-93, Vol. 1; see the background notes to *Am Bodach Baigeir* in Appendix A for full details.

from Argyll and one from Uist -- indicates that the stories may have been well known in their linked form in Scotland in the past, and the figures from Ireland also show that the stories existed together earlier in the Gaelic tradition. In addition to Brian's, Ailidh Dall's and Alexander Stewart's recordings, the other recent recording which links the two stories is a 1963 version recorded from John MacPhail of North Uist (SA 1963/8/A4 & B) entitled "*Biast na Naoi Ceann*" ("The Beast of the Nine Heads"). Interestingly, this version is clearly not directly linked to the Stewart family's version, a point which adds further weight to the supposition that the stories were told together in Scotland as they were in Ireland, and indeed as they were in countries as far apart as Portugal, Lithuania and North America (cf. Thompson 1946: 27).

As for whether or not Brian himself heard the stories told together, the evidence would suggest that he did. As I have mentioned, his uncle, Ailidh Dall, did indeed connect the two stories together,<sup>35</sup> and Donald Archie MacDonald was clearly aware of this -- hence his questions to Brian in 1974 as to whether the stories were connected. We already know that Ailidh Dall and Brian both have Brian's grandmother Siùsie (Ailidh Dall's mother) as a common source for their stories, and also that Brian used to hear stories from Ailidh himself; thus the most likely explanation for Brian's knowledge that the two stories are linked is that he heard them told together by his uncle Ailidh and also by his grandmother. The second piece of evidence that the stories were linked in Brian's family tradition comes from a recording of the linked stories told by another Alexander Stewart, a second cousin of Brian's who was recorded by Calum Maclean in the 1950s and who is referred to in the records of the School of Scottish Studies as "Alexander Stewart, travelling tinsmith, Muir of Ord". This Alexander Stewart was in fact a grandson of Brian's grandmother Siùsie's *sister*, Clementina Stewart (born c. 1832, died 1914), and just as Brian heard stories from his grandmother, so Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord heard the same stories from his own grandmother. The result is that many of Alexander Stewart's stories are similar to Brian's and Ailidh Dall's stories, as they come from the same source(s) and have been passed down through two sisters.<sup>36</sup> Not

<sup>35</sup>Recorded in 1957 as *Sgeulachd a' Chòcaire*, School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1957/41/A2 & B1.

<sup>36</sup>Alexander Stewart's identity and exact relationship to Brian's family has been unclear until now (see Bruford and MacDonald 1994: 451, note 16, where they describe him as "a mystery") but Brian and other members of his family have helped to identify him as Siùsie's sister's grandson. I am grateful to Mrs. Cathy Laing of N. Uist for her help in this regard, and to Mr. Alec John Williamson of Edderton. Alexander Stewart was recorded in Muir of Ord in 1955 by Calum Maclean, but afterwards fieldworkers from the School of Scottish Studies could not find him again. From his recordings in the



only has Alexander Stewart recorded four stories which are also in Brian's repertoire -- *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, *Stòiridh Loircein*, *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* and *Am Maraiche Màirneal* -- but the language of his stories is often similar to Brian's, with a good amount of set dialogue and set phrases in common. Thus Alexander Stewart's stories can be a useful point of comparison when discussing Brian's material, and his recorded version of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*<sup>37</sup> told with the *Bodach Baigeir* frame helps to establish that this is the form of the story complex as was current in the Stewart family tradition. Finally, there is one more piece of evidence that Brian originally heard the stories as a linked unit, and this evidence comes from his recordings of *Am Bodach Baigeir*. In every recorded version of *Am Bodach Baigeir*, Brian includes the ending in which the wife identifies her husband by the absence of the tip of his little finger, even though he does not include the earlier *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* episodes in which the wife cuts off the finger-tip in the first place. While the listener may not understand the significance of this detail, the link is nevertheless preserved,<sup>38</sup> pointing us to the conclusion that Brian originally heard the stories together.<sup>39</sup> Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord's 1955 recording (SA 1955/131/B4) of the two stories told together also preserves this link detail, again strongly suggesting that the stories were linked in this form in the Stewart family tradition.

If then, as seems clear, the stories were linked and Brian heard them told together, we have a very interesting phenomenon indeed: to all appearances, our storyteller forgot that the stories were linked when he recorded them in the 1970s, and only remembers the full story complex in 1993, probably three or four decades since he last heard the story told, and two decades after he has specifically stated that the stories are not linked. What has made him finally remember that the two stories may be told together? I can only conclude that the logical link detail is the key to Brian's memory of how the two are linked. Even if he remembered other aspects of the way in which the stories went together, it must have been the logical fitting together of the two

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School, he seems to have been a master storyteller, and it is to be regretted that he was not located again; I am told that he died in the 1970s. In many respects his stories are strikingly similar to Brian's, and it seems most likely that both Brian and Alexander have inherited stories from a common great-grandparent (or even great-great-grandparent); a study comparing their versions of stories would be extremely interesting for the light it might cast on the effects of oral transmission on the form and language of the stories. For Calum Maclean's engaging description of his 1955 meeting with Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord, see Maclean 1990: 185-192.

<sup>37</sup>Recorded in July 1955 as *Dithis Mhac a' Rìgh*, School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1955/131/B4.

<sup>38</sup>Such a detail is often referred to as a "blind motif" by folktale scholars.

<sup>39</sup>It is also worth noting the possibility that Brian's grandmother may have told the stories to him separately at times, which could also account for his separately told versions of the 1970s.



stories -- almost like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle -- which allowed him to remember for certain how the stories were connected, and more importantly, to explain this to me with such confidence. Here then we have an excellent demonstration of how this link mechanism may work. In addition, we have an example of another phenomenon: how linked stories may come apart from each other and come to be regarded as quite separate stories within the tradition. Bruford (1969: 225 ff.) tells us that it is common for story elements to combine and come apart in this way,<sup>40</sup> as he has deduced from his wide study of recorded stories and manuscripts; but here we have an actual example of the process occurring before our eyes. Thus just as we saw with the example of the *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn*' story complex, we again have an example of how linked stories could easily have been told separately, and how a listener might have taken away one of the tales and passed it on as a separate story. For the Stewarts, however, the link detail has helped to maintain the linked tale structure, again resulting in rare evidence of a tradition which was once widespread.

Our discussion of the ways in which story versions may vary from each other on the structural level has thus far allowed us to examine optional repeat episodes, parallel episodes, and the omission of episodes due to lapses of memory, which has in turn led to the discussion of the storyteller's understanding of the story's structure, logical links and the role of logical "programming" in holding story episodes together. There are two more instances of structural instability in Brian's repertoire to be examined, one in *Stòiridh Ladhair* and one in *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*; I shall examine *Stòiridh Ladhair* first.

### **Similar Episodes Forgotten or Omitted**

#### ***Stòiridh Ladhair***

We have already discussed the optional repeat episodes in *Stòiridh Ladhair*, citing the instability of the order in which Episodes 2 and 3 appear, and the complete omission of Episode 2 in the 1995 version. There is, however, a further instance of structural variation within the group of *Stòiridh Ladhair* recordings. As already summarised above, *Stòiridh Ladhair* is about a king who plays cards with an otherworld woman and wins a wife and a horse from her. In Episode 4 of the story, the king plays dice with the woman, and this time he loses the game. The woman thus must name her prize, and she does so: she puts the king under obligation to her to go on a quest for "*fios feagal an aon sgeul*" ("true knowledge of the one tale").

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<sup>40</sup>As does Antti Aarne in his list of the most typical types of changes which occur in traditional tales, as quoted in Stith Thompson 1946: 436.

This episode involves the king and Ladhar travelling to another kingdom where they find another king and force him to tell them the story of an adventure which happened to him in the past. This recounting of the king's adventure is apparently the object of the quest, the "knowledge of the one tale" which must be obtained. After hearing the other king's story, the same adventure befalls the king and Ladhar, after which they successfully escape and return home. In Episode 5 the king and the otherworldly woman play dice again, and the king again loses. The woman again puts him under obligation to her, this time to retrieve "*ceann fear agus filidh*".<sup>41</sup> As I have discussed in Chapter Three, both the terms "*fios feagal an aon sgeul*" and "*ceann fear agus filidh*" mean little to Brian, and his own explanation for the latter is that it means "the head of that fellow, *filidh*."<sup>42</sup> In any case, both Episodes 4 and 5 involve a quest on which the king is sent after losing a game of dice to the otherworldly woman.

In the 1974 version of *Stòiridh Ladhair*, Brian has great difficulty remembering Episode 5, the quest for the head of '*fear agus filidh*', while in his 1995 version (already shortened by the omission of the repeat Episode 2) he does not include Episode 4, the quest for *fios feagal an aon sgeul*. While I shall examine each of these examples in turn, it may be useful to point out here that the two episodes are similar to each other in that they both involve quests and both are imposed on our heroes as a binding obligation (*geas*) by the otherworldly woman, and in these ways they are roughly parallel. Of course, the content of the two episodes is not the same -- in fact, there is nothing that links them together except the overall episodic structure of the story -- and this may help to explain why it is difficult for Brian to remember the content of these episodes. But we shall discuss this in further detail once we have examined each version separately.

In the 1974 version, recorded by Donald Archie MacDonald, Brian tells a full version of the story until he reaches the fifth episode. Up until this point, Brian has provided a good amount of detail, using much of the set dialogue and set phrasing which he associates with the story. Therefore it seems that Brian is in good form and is telling a full version of the story as he reaches the point at which Episode 5 should be told. However, when he comes to this juncture he simply cannot remember what happens next, and his effort to recover the forgotten episode is most interesting. He says:

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. footnote 13 above.

<sup>42</sup> 31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2.

**B.S.:** [*following on from end of Episode 4:*] Agus, eh, chaidh iad sin air ais, gus a', an oighreachd aca fhèin rithistich, bha sin, eh, a' chiad rud dhe -- shin agai' fi-- fios feagal a', an aon sgeul, fhuair e sin 's dh'innis e nis dhan-- dhith-eas, dè thachair dhan 'rìgh bha seo, 's ciamar a fhuair e. Ach nis, dè an ath rud, ach chan eil cuimhn' agam air, air, air a' -- bho chaob sin dith, shin far a' robh mi 'faighinn stuck. Chuir i air folbh a-rithisti' e, dh'iarraidh, eh, ceann fear agus filidh. Ach seo, chan eil cuimhn' agam air sin.

**D.A.M.** Ceann fear agus filidh.

**B.S.** Ceann fear agus filidh. 'S chan fhaodadh gin bhith cuide ris ach, eh, e fhèin. Chan fhaodadh e Ladhar thoir' leis. Chan fhaodadh e creutair thoir leis ach e fhèin. Ach seall, cha, chan eil cuimhn', cuimhn' agam, ged a bheireadh si' an ceann dith, ciamar a bha ceann fear agus filidh. Eh, eh, thàinig e, ach tha fhios a'm air an deireadh aig a' stòiridh.

*[And, oh, they went back then, to the, their own kingdom again, that was, eh, the first thing -- there you have 'fi-- fios feagal a', an aon sgeul', he got that and he told it now to -- to her, what happened to that king, and how he got it. [i.e., how he got 'fios feagal an aon sgeul']. But now, what's the next thing, but I can't remember that, that, that -- from that part of it, that's where I was getting stuck. She sent him away again, to get, eh, 'ceann fear agus filidh'. But here, I don't remember that.]*

**D.A.M.:** 'Ceann fear agus filidh'.

**B.S.:** 'Ceann fear agus filidh'. And no one could be with him but, eh, himself. He couldn't take Ladhar with him. He couldn't take a single creature with him but himself. But look, I can't, I can't remember, even if you gave me the end of it, how it was with 'ceann fear agus filidh'. Eh, eh, he came, but I know the end of the story.]

Here then Brian *knows* that something must come next, but he simply cannot remember the content of the episode. This is made even more interesting by the fact that Brian knows which episode it is: he knows that this is the episode in which the king must seek *ceann fear agus filidh*. However, he cannot remember what happens during this quest. The obvious question which arises is why Brian cannot remember this particular episode: what is it about this situation which makes it difficult for our storyteller to remember this quest? One possibility which arises is that there are no link details which tie Episode 5 into the rest of the story. Episodes 4 and 5 are roughly analogous in that they are both quest episodes, but besides for this each one of these episodes can actually stand alone independently of a story, and they thus represent the kind of episode-long motif which, according to Bruford "may, in fact, be added to any part of a story without further excuse and without greatly damaging the shape of the whole...." (1969: 227). Since such episodes are self-contained (and are therefore perhaps easily manipulated by the storyteller who wishes to lengthen a story -- thus in a sense serving as a mechanism for expansion), they may not be easy

to recollect if a storyteller has a temporary lapse of memory, for there is no trigger detail in the rest of the story to remind him of the *content* of the episode. It can, of course, be supposed that there was once a trigger or linking detail which tied the story together more tightly, but that such a detail has been lost over time; this would support Alan Bruford's conjecture that motifs drop out of stories when they are not "striking, concise or coherent" or logically linked with the rest of the story (1969: 230-231), and may help us to understand the process by which a story loses its episodes and attracts new ones over time.

In fact, when we consider this example we can see that the *structure* of the story is what reminds Brian that the quest episodes exist: the otherworldly woman wins at dice with the king, and the storyteller knows that when this happens the king must pay the price by carrying out whatever task the woman names as her prize. However, as the *content* of the quest episodes is not logically linked to earlier details of the story, it is easy to see how the content of such an episode could be forgotten (and perhaps later remembered when telling the story on another occasion -- as in fact does happen with Brian). Thus whether or not a logical link once existed in the story which made the content of Episodes 4 and 5 more memorable is impossible to say with any certainty; however, the story as Brian now has it does indeed lack reminders as to the contents of Episodes 4 and 5, and this may be the reason for which he has trouble remembering these particular episodes. It is perhaps no coincidence that of all the stories in Brian's repertoire, these episodes are the only ones which Brian has difficulty remembering while telling a story, for this is the only story which contains such episodes (i.e., episodes required by the story structure, the content of which can be independent of the rest of the story). The only roughly similar situation which arises in Brian's storytelling is his omission of Episode 2 in *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn*, the episode of Oisean's wife and the puppies, which is also part of a complex story structure which, as already discussed above, is held together by means of linking details.<sup>43</sup> Thus in some of the only stories in Brian's repertoire with complex structures (more complex than his other stories, which generally follow a linear, five- or six-episode pattern), we encounter greater problems with remembering the story correctly. Again, this lends weight to Bruford's suppositions as to how stories have developed and how episodes are added or lost over time (see especially 1969,

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<sup>43</sup>This is not to say that Brian does not forget *details* of other stories, as does indeed sometimes happen. However, the forgetting of an entire episode is a much less common occurrence in his storytelling.



Chapter 18, "Gain and Loss of Motifs"), the stories with the more complex structures providing more difficulties for our storyteller.

In addition to the fact that the episode's content is not linked to the rest of the story, the content of this episode is noteworthy for another reason as well. The central portion of this episode consists of a "set piece" in which the hero approaches a giant's castle, calls for the object which he is seeking, and engages in combat with first the giant's men and then with the giant himself, eventually killing the giant. This incident contains set dialogue and language, and is basically a fixed incident which always occurs in a highly similar form whenever Brian uses it: an episode-long battle run as it were, which I shall refer to as an "episodic run". The fact is that this is the *only* episodic run in Brian's entire repertoire: while there are many instances of fixed dialogue, this is really the only episode-long set piece which Brian uses.<sup>44</sup> Not only does he use this episodic run in *Stòiridh Ladhair*, but he also uses the same episodic run in Episode 3 of *Stòiridh Loircein* -- in fact, in *Loircean* the run is expanded by repeating the action three times. Thus what we have here is an instance of Brian not being able to remember the only episodic run in his repertoire, a fact which is extremely important in trying to understand just what it is that Brian cannot remember.

It is clear that Brian's memory is operating on different levels here, for while he can remember the shape of the story -- facilitated, perhaps, by its repeating structure -- he cannot remember an episode which is in fact an extended run consisting of fixed language and action. What this indicates is that at some level, Brian differentiates between structure and content, keeping the shape of the story fixed in his memory and "filling in the gaps" with the correct content as he tells it. We get a sense, as earlier, that it is in the telling of the story that the story unfolds in the storyteller's mind. On this occasion Brian cannot remember the contents of an entire episode, precisely because the episode consists of one motif -- the seeking of an object at a giant's castle -- which has been fossilised into an extended run in Brian's family's tradition. (This same episodic run is in fact used by Ailidh Dall (SA 1957/36 & 37 and SA 1957/42/B2) in a highly similar form). Thus my speculation above that the *independence* of the episode and the lack of memory-inducing trigger details may contribute to Brian's difficulty in remembering the episode's content is perhaps

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<sup>44</sup>The concept of "runs" and the episode-long battle run discussed here are considered in further detail in the subsection "Shared Episodic Runs" in the section on "Sharing of Material between Stories" below.



strengthened by our knowledge that he does indeed *know* the content well -- it is an episodic run which he and other members of his family use in more than one story. Whatever is occurring in his memory here, it is clear that structure and content are being remembered differently.

Discussing this same situation, Bruford speculates that episodes may be borrowed when, as with Brian, the storyteller cannot remember what comes next in a story (1969: 228). Citing an instance in which Seán Ó Conaill could not remember the ending of a story, he hypothesises that whereas Ó Conaill "...conjectures how his incomplete version of *Giolla an Fhiugha* should finish (LSIC: 254), a less scrupulous storyteller might simply supply an end." We might apply the same comment to Brian's behaviour, for it is clear that he has a specific episode in mind and that he has no intention of improvising the contents. Whether or not other storytellers may borrow episodes when they encounter such difficulties, it is clear from his behaviour that Brian would not. This impression that Brian believes that the contents of the story may not be altered is reinforced when we observe him trying to remember the run. He manages to remember the beginning and end of the episode -- i.e., the setting for the run -- and relates them as follows:

[following on from section excerpted above:]

**D.A.M.:** 'Seadh.

**B.S.:** Eh, dar a thàinig e air ais, agus ceann fear agus filidh aig', bha ceann fear agus filidh aig' [...]. 'S dar a thàinig e, cha robh e a' faithneachdainn 'n àit' aig' fhèin.

Ach choinnich Ladhar e, 's thuirt e ri Ladhar, "Glèidh Dia mi, Ladhar" thuirt e, "dè dh'èirich, de dh'èirich dhan àit' ? Chan eil mis' 'faithneachdainn *bit, bit* dheth. Chan eil coill' ann, 's chan eil dad eil' ann."

"O, mis, mis," thuirt e, "rinn e," thuirt Ladhar, "chuir mis' na h-uile h-àit' 'na thein'. Chuir mi na monaidhean a'd [na] thein'," air a shon-as. "[Air n-ur son]," thuirt e, "gu' tigeadh si' air ais." Agus: "An d'fhuair thu e? D'fhuair thu a' ceann?"

"O, fhuair," thuirt a' -- mac a' rìgh.

"Thoir thus' dhomh-as e."

'S fhuair -- thug e an' ceann leis -- 'se ceann fomhair a bh'ann -- dha Ladhar.

Thuirt e, "Bheir mis' dhith a chuideam 's fhaireachdainn."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Here Ladhar is about to take the head obtained on his quest (*ceann fear agus filidh*) and kill the otherworldly woman with it. When I have asked Brian to explain the phrase *Bheir mis' dhith a chuideam 's fhaireachdainn* he has explained it thus: "[She'll] feel the ... the ... the strength and the weight of it" (13 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2, Side A), and on another occasion as: "You know, she would feel the weight of it when she, when she, when he fired it at her, the head" (1 April 1995, Tape 1 of 2, Side A).

'S char Ladhar bhàn leis a' cheann 's, thug e dìreach [*hesitates slightly*] *balong*<sup>46</sup> oirr' fhèin leis a' cheann 's, mharbh e i fhèin cuideachd.  
 "Sheo a-nis, cha chuir i dragh ort tuillidh," thuirt e.<sup>47</sup>

[D.A.M.: Yes.

**B.S.:** *Eh, when he cam back, and he had the head of 'fear agus filidh', he had the head of 'fear agus filidh,' [...]. And when he came, he was not recognising his own place.*

*But Ladhar met him, and he said to Ladhar, "God save me, Ladhar," he said, "what happened, what happened to the place? I don't recognise one bit of it. There's no forest here, and there's not anything else here."*

*"Oh, [it was] I, I," he said, "who did it," said Ladhar, "I set the whole place on fire. I set your hills on fire, for his sake. [For your sake]," he said, "so that you would come back." And: "Did you get it? Did you get the head?"*

*"Oh, yes," said the -- son of the king.*

*"Give it to me."*

*And he got -- he brought the head with him -- it was the head of a giant -- to Ladhar. He said, "I'll give her its weight [so that she'll feel it] ."<sup>48</sup>*

*And Ladhar went down with the head and, he just [hesitates slightly] struck her with the head and, he killed her too.*

*"Here now, she won't bother you anymore," he said.]*

Thus it is clear that the only element of the episode which Brian cannot remember is the run concerning the giant's castle. Following this, he discusses the fact that he cannot remember this information:

Shin a'd an ceann aic' ach, tha pìos eile nach eil cuimhn' agam air. Fhios a'd, eh, dar a char -- dh'fholbh e 's, gus an tàinig e air ais an darna triob, ag iarraidh ceann-- cha -- cha -- tha mi 'fàs *stuck*, gus an, an -- dh'fheuch mi cho fad-- chan eil cuimhn' idir agam.

**D.A.M.:** Ach 'se seo an deireadh aice.

**B.S.** Shin agai', sin agai' an deireadh aic'.

**D.A.M.** Leis a' cheann fear agus filidh.

**B.S.** Leis a' cheann aig fear agus filidh. Choinnich Ladhar e 's, bha -- chan aithneadh e a' t-àit', leis na chuir e 'na thein' e. Chuir e 'na thein' na coilltean 's, eh, h-uile dad a bh'aig'. 'S thug e, thug e an ceann, dh'iarr Ladhar an ceann, 's thug e, mac a' rìgh, dha Ladhar e. 'S char Ladhar far a' robh i.

"Nis," thuirt e, "shin a'd ceann fear agus filidh, agus gheobh thu 'chuideam 's 'fhaireachdainn."

Thug e *balong* oirr'-s', leis a' cheann. Bhuail e oirr'-eas, mharbh e i. 'S thuirt e ri La-- ris, eh, mac a' rìgh, "Nis," thuirt e, "cha chuir i air folbh tuillidh thu."

<sup>46</sup>A word which Brian occasionally uses, which appears to mean "a blow".

<sup>47</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/32/A4.

<sup>48</sup>This translation is a compromise between the literal meaning of the words and the way in which Brian understands the phrase.

Shin agai' ceann na stòiridh.

*[B.S.: That's the end of it but, there's another piece that I cannot remember. You know, eh, when [Ladhar] went -- he went and, until he came back the second time, seeking the head-- I can't -- I can't -- I get stuck, to the, the -- I tried as far -- I can't remember at all.]*

*D.A.M.: But this is the end of it [i.e., of the story].*

*B.S.: There you have, there you have its ending.*

*D.A.M.: With the head of 'fear agus filidh'.*

*B.S.: With the head of 'fear agus filidh'. Ladhar met him and, it was -- he didn't recognise the place, because he had set it on fire. He set the forest on fire and, eh, everything that he had. And he gave, he gave the head, Ladhar asked for the head, and he gave, the king's son, it to Ladhar. And Ladhar went to where she was.*

*"Now," he said, "there you have the head of 'fear agus filidh', and you'll feel the weight of it."*

*He struck her, with the head. He beat her, he killed her. And he said to La--to, eh, the king's son, "Now," he said, "she won't send you away again." There you have the end of the story.]*

Here we see Brian rehearsing the elements over and over again in his effort to recover the missing section. Most interesting is to watch the storyteller at work in this process of conscious rehearsal. He goes over the main points of the story, mentioning some of its key elements -- including some of the formulaic dialogue -- in what could almost be described as a severely condensed version of the story. Of course when he tells the story he will expand it, but in a few brief sentences he has included all the core elements of the episode outwith the run which he has forgotten. Equally important is the fact that he is not content to invent new details if his memory fails him. This again confirms our impression of Brian's storytelling ethic: that he tries to tell the stories the way that he remembers hearing them. Thus while scholars may speculate as to the way in which storytellers of the past may have combined episodes to lengthen or even create new stories (see for example Bruford's comments above and 1969: 238-243; and O' Nolan 1975: 248), with our own storyteller we see that such a practice would not be an option. This is not to say that on an *unconscious* level he does not improvise or share *details* between stories or episodes; but at least on a conscious level, he is striving to tell a specific story in a specific way. The 1974 interview ends with Brian rehearsing the episode yet again, much as he does above, especially after being told by Donald Archie MacDonald that the story is a rare one and that they have never recorded it from anyone before:

*D.A.M.: Cha d'fhuair sinn a-riamh a' stòiridh sin aig duine.*

**B.S.:** Nach d'fhuair gu dearbh?

**D.A.M.:** Cha d'fhuair.

**B.S.:** O, uill, 'seadh, tha mi duilich, ma tha, nach eil am pìos eil' dith agam.

**Alan Bruford:** Tha rudeigin coltach ris ann an Eirinn.

**D.A.M.:** Ann an Eirinn, tha.

**B.S.:** Aye. Tha mi 'creidsinn gu bheil.

**D.A.M.:** Shiorraidh tha sin uamhasach [*noise on tape; cannot hear end of sentence*]. 'Sann glè, glè ainneamh a chluinneas sinn a' stòiridh.

[*Tape is paused. Resumes with:*]

**B.S.:** Char e dhèanamh cùmh' agus bròn airson 'athar rithistich 's char aid ri' na dìstean, 's choisinn i a-rithisti'. Sin, thuirt is' ris, mar thuirt i ris roimhe, a' chiad triob, "mo chrosan 's mo gheas-- gheasan, trì buaraichean matha sìdh, nach stad oidhch' a's gach taigh thu, gus a' faigh thu dhomh-as ceann fear agus filidh. Ach, 'se ceann fear agus filidh, 'se fomhair a bh'ann, 's bha aig' ri 'mharbhadh, ach, seallaibh, chan urr-- chan eil mi, chan eil cuimhn' agam ciamar a chaidh e na ... eh --

**D.A.M.:** Mar a mharbh e e.

**B.S.:** Aye, mar a mharbh e e. 'S thug e air ais ceann fear agus filidh, air a', muin an eich. 'S dar a thàinig e air ais, uill, dh'innis mi dhuibh mar tha, choinnich Ladhar e. 'S chuir Ladhar às dhith-s' leis a' cheann. Thug e [*balong*] oirr' leis--

[*Recording ends.*]

**D.A.M.:** *We never got that story from anyone.*

**B.S.:** *Didn't you indeed?*

**D.A.M.:** *No.*

**B.S.:** *Oh, well, yes, I am sorry, then, that I don't have the other piece of it.*

**Alan Bruford:** *There's something similar to it in Ireland.*

**D.A.M.:** *In Ireland, yes.*

**B.S.:** *Aye. I believe there is.*

**D.A.M.:** *Goodness, that's awful [*noise on tape; cannot hear end of sentence*]. It's very, very rare that we hear the story.*

[*Tape is paused. Resumes with:*]

**B.S.:** *He went to lament his father again and they went at the dice, and she won again. Then, she said to him, as she said to him previously, the first time, "my crosses and my spell-- spells, the three fetters of the fairy [women], you will not stop a night in [any] house, until you bring me the head of 'fear agus filidh'. But, the head of 'fear agus filidh', he was a giant, and he [Ladhar] had to kill him, but, look, I can't -- I don't, I don't remember how he went ... eh --*

**D.A.M.:** *How he killed him.*

**B.S.:** *Aye, how he killed him. And he brought back the head of 'fear agus filidh', on the, back of the horse. And when he came back, well, I told you already, Ladhar met him. And Ladhar killed her with the head. He struck her with it--*

[*Recording ends.*]



While this last section again reinforces our impression that Brian has all the elements of the episode except for the run, it is also telling to see him rehearsing the story again and again. Here Brian seems quite oblivious to the presence of the other people in the room, and what we have here is a rare glimpse into the mind of the storyteller, for it is really as if he is thinking aloud. If this is indeed the case, then it seems that conscious repetition of the stories is an extremely important part of Brian's storytelling, and it seems likely that it is one of the key tools which he used both to learn and remember stories.

### ***Stòiridh Ladhair - 1995 Version***

The other version of *Stòiridh Ladhair* in which Brian forgets an episode is his 1995 version, during which he remembers Episode 5 (*ceann fear agus filidh*) without any difficulty, but omits Episode 4, the episode in which he seeks *fìos feagal an aon sgeul*. As discussed above, these are the two episodes which we might most expect Brian to forget, due to their "stand-alone" nature and lack of connection with the rest of the story. This episode, even more than Episode 5, would be potentially difficult for Brian to remember, for it involves a fairly complicated story *and* a story-within-a-story, and is not duplicated anywhere else in his repertoire. Thus this instance of omission reinforces the conclusions drawn above as to the ease with which such episodes might be forgotten.

One other point of interest in regard to the 1995 version is that whereas in the 1974 telling Brian knew there was another episode but could not remember its contents, here Brian does not seem to realise that he has omitted an episode at all. He simply tells the beginning of the story (paring it down by omitting one of the "optional repeat" episodes) and moves on to the quest for *ceann fear agus filidh* which is prompted by the woman's winning at dice. We can perhaps see this simply as a case of omission, facilitated by the repeating structure of the story; for this particular structure -- the protagonists play at cards, one names a prize, the other must supply the prize -- serves to make the omission of an episode less noticeable, as even if an episode has been left out the basic structure is still retained. Thus, taken with the independent nature of the contents of the episode, it is understandable that the storyteller may be prone to forgetting such an episode. There is also an additional possibility: that the circumstances of the telling of the story also contributed to its reduced form. As I have noted in the discussion of optional repeat episodes, this version is an instance in which Brian does not expand the first optional repeat, but instead only tells one episode in which the king wins at cards. Thus it is that in this



story the king wins a horse but not a wife. I have already speculated above as to whether this could be a case *not* of forgetting, but of choice or circumstance: the telling is an extremely brief one, and it is possible that the conditions of recording were such that they elicited a shortened version from Brian. Thus it is that the context of the storytelling -- the nursing home setting, the audience of only one person (myself) -- together with the fact of Brian's advanced age combined to affect his performance and perhaps caused him to shorten his story by telling me about not two card games but one, and not two dice games but one. Of course, we cannot second-guess the intentions of the storyteller, but in addition to the possibility that Brian simply forgot Episode 4 as proposed above, we must also consider that the storytelling context may have elicited a shortened version from Brian on this occasion. Further, we must consider that such a shortening of the story may not have been completely by choice: it seems clear from his comments that Brian holds the integrity of the story as an important principle, and perhaps if any shortening of the story took place this would not have been at the conscious level. Surely the fact that he did not violate the *structure* of the story -- that is, he did tell about the card game and the dice game, but simply did not *repeat* these motifs -- must have contributed to a sense that he had told the story "correctly," instead of leaving him with the feeling that something was missing from the story. While we can never know with absolute certainty the true reason behind the omission of the episode on this occasion, this instance is certainly striking for its contrast with the 1974 recording, in which Brian was so intent on recovering the forgotten episode 5. Therefore, while we can only speculate as to the cognitive processes at work, it seems most likely that the omission was due to either the ease with which such an independent episode could be omitted, or the less than ideal circumstances under which the story was told, or a combination of the two. Thus while this example provides an opportunity to explore the relationship between story structure and the storyteller's memory, it also strengthens a growing impression that the storytelling context has a direct effect on Brian's performance.

### **Differences between Versions of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn***

The final story which exhibits structural instability across its separate versions is Brian's *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*. This group of versions contains the highest degree of variation of all the stories in our selection. Some of the variation is due to the fact that many of the details do not appear within the episodes in the same order, which leads to an impression that the versions differ from each other more than is actually the case. When the simplified plot summary and corresponding chart of the

separate versions are assembled, however, it can be seen that the stories do still exhibit a high degree of similarity to each other in terms of the core of details and events which are told in each version. Still, the degree of variation stands out as being greater than that of Brian's other stories, and it will be useful to examine the differences between the versions to see what we can learn.

The five versions of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* recorded span a period of 36 years, the first dating from 1958 (recorded by Hamish Henderson), the second from 1973 (recorded by David Clement) and the last three recorded by myself in 1993 and 1994. Thus we have a rare instance in which we can compare a story told at three different stages in Brian's life: the first when he was only 48 years old, the next when he was 64, and finally again when he was in his eighties. While this opportunity of comparing the story over a longer period of time is welcome, I should also point out that the fact that Brian only recorded the story once in the 1970's indicates to me that he may not have felt that he knew the story well enough at that time to tell it more frequently; and it also means that until I recorded the story again in 1993, Brian had only recorded the story once in the 36 years between 1958 and 1993. Whether or not he told the story to anyone else during that period is another question; however, the somewhat disjointed nature of the versions indicates to me that this story was one which Brian did not know -- or did not remember -- as well as the others. In addition to the fact that Brian's grasp on this story may not be as strong as his grasp on the other complete stories in his repertoire, there is the additional fact that this story is a version of the native Gaelic *Céadach* romance -- identified by Bruford as "probably the most popular of all Fenian folk-tales" and possibly representing an early literary romance (1969: 123) -- and as such derives from a rather long and fairly involved narrative. Although there are no frame stories here held together by logical links as in *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* or the *Còcaire + Bodach Baigeir* stories, the fact remains that like those stories, *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* is structurally complex, and this may also contribute to Brian's difficulties in remembering it.<sup>49</sup>

### ***Differences between 1958 Recording and Later Recordings Represent Loss of motifs over Time***

The first significant variation which occurs among the versions is to be found in the first episode of the story, which describes *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn's* birth to his

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<sup>49</sup>For more details on the structure of existing variants, see Bruford's discussion of the story in "Chapter 11 - The Fenian Cycle: Anomalies" (1969: 123 - 128).

father under enchanted conditions.<sup>50</sup> Brian tells how *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*'s father the king goes astray in a magic mist while hunting, and follows a light to a house at which he receives hospitality for the night. In the morning, the king makes ready to leave, but is told that he cannot go until he baptises his son. The king thinks that this is strange, but it transpires that he has been a guest in the house for some time, apparently in the company of otherworldly folk. He baptises his son (*Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*) and brings him home to his kingdom, where he also has another son by his wife the queen. In most of Brian's versions, he now moves on to Episode 2, and tells of how *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* goes to join the Fèinn. However, in the 1958 version Brian includes the fact that one day the half-brothers (*Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* and the king's son by his wife the queen) are playing outside the door when a passing beggar-man prophesies that although the two boys are fond of one another, one of them will one day kill the other. This of course is recognisably the same as the opening incident which we find in *Am Bodach Baigeir*, and even the same formulaic language is used when the beggar pronounces his judgement:

"O," thuirt es', " 'se dà ghiullan brèagha aid, agus tha aid-s' measail air a chèile, ach ged is measail air a chèil' aid, marbhaidh an darna fear 'fear eil' diubh fhathast."<sup>51</sup>

["Oh," he said, "they're two lovely lads, and they are fond of one another, but although they are fond of one another, one of them will kill the other of them yet."]

As in *Am Bodach Baigeir*, this prophecy comes true later in the story, and after *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* resurrects his brother at the end of the story, they are forced to admit that they did not manage to prove the beggar wrong. As this motif is completely absent in all of Brian's other versions, we might at first assume that this is an instance in which Brian borrows the detail from *Am Bodach Baigeir* into *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, and that it is therefore evidence that Brian is capable of manipulating motifs or lifting traditional material from one story for use in another. However, if we look to the evidence provided by the recordings of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* made from other members of Brian's family, we actually find that the *bodach baigeir* motif seems to be the norm and not the exception for this story. Brian's cousin Mary Stewart (Ailidh Dall's daughter) uses the *bodach baigeir* motif in her 1957 recording of the story (SA 1957/48/A4 & B1), as does Ailidh Dall (SA

<sup>50</sup>This motif is the same as that described by Bruford as a *brugh* opening, 1969: 225.

<sup>51</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1958/72.

1958/75/B2 and SA 1958/76/A1).<sup>52</sup> Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord does *not* have the motif in his 1955 version (SA 1955/124/A2), although many other details of the story are similar to Brian's version. Interestingly, if we look to the wider tradition, we also find two instances in which this motif appears as part of the *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* story. First, in a version of the story printed in Volume IV of *Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition* (John Gregorson Campbell (ed.) 1891: 225-232), collected by the editor sometime in the last third of the nineteenth century, a similar prediction of fratricide is made, this time by an old woman rather than a passing beggar. The woman states that of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* and his two companions, one will kill the others yet.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, in a Cape Breton version of the story told by Neil MacIntyre of Benacadie Pond, printed in *Gairm* in 1956<sup>54</sup> under the title "*Rìgh na Greige*," a "*fear-fiosachd*" (a male fortune teller) is called for and predicts that one of the brothers will kill the other one yet. This Cape Breton version displays some close similarities with Brian's version, and although the relationship between the two versions is not known, the fact that the same prediction of fratricide also appears here further strengthens the supposition that the motif has been associated with the story in oral tradition and does not represent a spontaneous addition by Brian in his 1958 telling.<sup>55</sup> Thus if we accept that the motif was part of the story as Brian first heard it, we are left with the question of why he does not include it in his 1973 telling and the versions recorded in the 1990's. I have not been able to locate any further evidence to help answer this question, and my best guess is that we must conclude that here we have an instance in which our storyteller has forgotten part of a story (at least as far as we can tell from the recordings -- it might be the case that if we were to ask for the story again, he might again include the beggar motif/prediction of fratricide), and we can actually witness this process as it has occurred over the years. Thus in 1958 Brian tells the fuller version as he probably heard it from his grandmother, but on the later occasions he forgets one of the threads which contributes to the weave of the story.

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<sup>52</sup>Ailidh Dall does not include the opening of the story in this version, but brings the *bodach baigeir* in at the end when the brothers admit that they did not manage to prove the beggar wrong.

<sup>53</sup>The wording used is as follows: " '*Ged tha sibh falbh comhla co mùirneach càirdeil an drasta,*' ors ise, '*marbhaidh an darna h-aon an t-aon eile*' "(231) [" 'Though you are going together so affectionately and friendly at present, the one will kill the other of you,' she said" (228)]

<sup>54</sup>An t-Earrach 1956: 15. Cf. MacDonell and Shaw 1981: 59 for another version with the prophecy.

<sup>55</sup>It is interesting that while the tradition itself may thus indicate that the free movement of motifs from story to story was once common, the same evidence from the tradition here indicates that Brian's own storytelling ethos is a conservative one, for the appearance of the *bodach baigeir* in the 1958 version represents conservatism rather than creativity.



Also in the 1958 version Brian includes an extra quest incident, in which *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* is required to go to *Eilean nam Fear Mòr* ("the Island of the Big Men" -- i.e., giants) in order to obtain a magic drinking horn, *Còrn an Leathraich*. Again this is not found in any of his other versions, but again it *is* found in Brian's cousin Mary's version, and Bruford also mentions that this quest is one of the feats most commonly found in other versions of the story (1969: 125). The incident is not, however, in Ailidh Dall's version, Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord's version, or the Cape Breton version mentioned above, although Ailidh Dall does indeed tell of a quest to *Eilean nam Fear Mòr* to obtain the same magical drinking vessel together with "*ceann fear agus filidh*" (discussed above) in his 1957 version of *Stòiridh Ladhair* (SA 1957/36 & 37). Since we know that this detail is a common feature of the story found throughout Scotland,<sup>56</sup> we cannot conjecture that Brian has simply whimsically added it in order to supply some extra colour or length to the story. Mary Stewart says that she heard the story from her grandmother, Siùsie, also Brian's source for the story, which further increases the likelihood that this is how Brian originally heard the story. However, the absence of the incident from the four versions recorded after 1958 is at odds with this evidence. The only conclusion which we can draw is that Brian has in fact forgotten this incident in the subsequent recordings, and that this rare 1958 recording is perhaps an indication that Brian's grasp of the material was far better in his youth. We can only wonder whether all of his stories would have been similarly fuller had they been recorded earlier; and we thus have an indication that his storytelling as recorded in the 1970s, and especially in the 1990s, may be affected by his age and his removal from an active storytelling context. In addition to this indication of the effect of time on Brian's memory, we also see again how an incident which has no logical link with the rest of the story -- in this case a quest for *Còrn an Leathraich* (the magic drinking horn) -- can be easily lost from a story. It is significant that this incident, like the omitted episodes in *Stòiridh Ladhair*, represents an independent motif (that of a quest for an object) which can easily become disconnected from the story and thus forgotten.

There is one further variation between versions of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* related to Episode 1 of the story, which is that the 1973 recording does not really contain Episode 1 at all. Instead, there is a brief opening describing *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* as the son of a widow who seeks work with the Fèinn, after which Brian proceeds to Episode 2. The only explanation I can posit for this variation is that

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<sup>56</sup>See for example J. MacDougall 1891: 27-55, a version called "*Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*" in which such a cup is sought.



either Brian simply forgot the introductory episode, or that he actually chose to shorten the story when he told it in 1973 by trimming the beginning. Considering Brian's attention to detail, the fact that he uses the Episode 1 opening in all his other versions, and the fact that other members of the family also use this opening, I would guess that the answer is that he forgot the opening when he told the story in 1973. Also in support of Episode 1 as being the "correct" opening as Brian would have learned it, is Bruford's assertion that of the recorded Scottish versions of this story, "the opening is the conventional one of the hero's birth to a fairy woman" (1969: 125). Thus again we get an indication that Brian's memory is not perfect and that sometimes a variation between versions of the same story may be best explained as a simple lapse of memory. Note also that in many senses the opening of this story is not logically linked with the rest of the story, which, as we have seen, would again make it easier for the storyteller to forget it, at least temporarily.

### ***Caoilte Incident Confused or Varied Between Versions***

Another variation or even point of confusion between versions is the incident in which *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* must race with another character, Caoilte. After Episode 1, *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* joins the Fèinn where he quickly makes himself unpopular by killing many of Fionn's men. Fionn seeks advice and is told that he should set difficult tasks for *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*. Fionn first sets *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* to leap back and forth across some sort of lake (the "*staing mhòr*")<sup>57</sup> while daggers are being thrown at him, and when he survives this ordeal unscathed he sets him to race with Caoilte, who is supposedly as swift as the wind, up the face of a hill. Brian usually relates this incident fairly hastily and without a great deal of detail, leading to the impression that Brian remembers the incident, but perhaps does not retain it in its entirety. In any case, what happens in the 1958 and September 1993 versions is that *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* races Caoilte (after giving him a head start while *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* ties his shoe), overtakes him, and turns him into a deer. After this he returns to his mother's home, where she implores him to disenchant Caoilte and return him to human form. This *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* finally does, and when Caoilte returns to the Fèinn he does not realise that he has been enchanted and away from the Fèinn for a long time. The story then moves on to the next incident, in which *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*

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<sup>57</sup>In an interview of 19 July 1997, BS explained that the *staing mhòr* is "...a big lochan of water." Interestingly, when Ailidh Dall recorded an English version of the story in 1958, he explained that there was "a twenty-four or twenty-five foot wide river" and that *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* was told that "you'll have to jump the river, frontways, backways and sideways" (SA 1958/75 B2 & 76/1).

must accompany Fionn on a quest to *Eilean nam Muc* ("the Isle of Pigs"). In the April 1993 and the 1994 versions of this story, however, Brian tells the beginning of the incident with Caoilte (how they race and how *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* turns Caoilte into a deer), but does not tell the rest of the incident (how *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* disenchanting him at his mother's request) until the very end of the story. Like the linking details of the golden ring and the crow which are suddenly interpolated into the story towards the end of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn*, the detail of Caoilte reappearing at the end of the story causes an impression of confusion and incoherence. Here, however, it is unclear why Brian has held off telling the end of the Caoilte incident until the end of the story, for there seems to be no logical necessity of the story which would cause him to remember the detail at this point. Also related to the Caoilte incident is the fact that it does not appear at all in the 1973 version. Thus there is the possibility that again, this is simply a detail which Brian does not remember very well; perhaps he supplies the end of the Caoilte incident at the end of the April 1993 and 1994 versions simply because he happens to remember these details at this point in his telling of the story.

It is possible that looking to the evidence provided by Brian's relatives' versions may help us understand why Brian twice suddenly remembers the Caoilte incident at the end of the story. In Mary Stewart's version of the story, the Caoilte incident is a self-contained detail, after which Caoilte actually acts as a messenger between Fionn and *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, helping to negotiate *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*'s return to the Fèinn (*Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* says he will not return unless he can be a steward in the Fèinn, a boon which Fionn grants him). Therefore in Mary's version Caoilte *must* be disenchanting at this point in the story. Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord relates a similar scenario in his recording of the story. Ailidh Dall's version does not shed any light on the question, as he only includes the detail of Caoilte as an after-thought in a discussion with Hamish Henderson following on his telling of the story. Interestingly, in the Cape Breton version, as in Brian's April 1993 and 1994 versions, Caoilte is not disenchanting until the very end of the story, and in fact the story ends with this detail. This might lead us to suppose that Brian did in fact hear the story told this way at some point in his life. Still, the evidence of his much closer relations seems to point to the fact that the Caoilte incident should be told all at once, and that Brian's variations between tellings represent a confusion of memory rather than the remembering of yet another version of the story. Thus in this case the evidence supplied by looking to Brian's relatives' versions as well as the wider oral tradition is somewhat inconclusive, and there can be no definitive answer

to the question of how Brian understands this story and why he makes the same "mistake" (if such it be) in two of his recordings of it.

### ***Episodes 2 and 3 Swap Places in September 1993 Version***

Yet another variation between versions is the fact that in the September 1993 version, Episode 2 (involving leaping across the loch and racing with Caoilte) and Episode 3 (which involves a long quest to *Eilean nam Muc*) swap places, Episode 3 appearing first. Unlike the case of the optional repeat episodes above in which the order of episodes does not affect the logic of the story, here the story is affected by this change in order, as the resulting narrative is less coherent and harder to follow. I would again attribute this to the vagaries of memory, and see it as an illustration of the way in which Brian's storytelling has partially broken down by the time he has reached his eighties. While this reconfirms my belief that Brian's storytelling powers were at their height when he was younger, it also helps to illustrate the processes of episode loss or structural change which take place in stories over time.

Thus Brian's versions of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, while exhibiting the most variation between story versions, also raise the most difficulty in the interpretation of this evidence. The inclusion of details (the *bodach baigeir* motif and the quest to *Eilean nam Fear Mòr*) in his earliest version which clearly seem to belong to the story but which are not present in later versions, along with Brian's confusion of the details surrounding Caoilte's role in the story in two of his later versions, point to the conclusion that this group of story versions provides evidence that Brian's storytelling ability, or at least his memory of the stories, has decreased over time. Like other evidence which suggests that context has a direct effect on our storyteller's performance, the material examined suggests that removal from an active, "natural" storytelling context may indeed be partially responsible for the changes in the story over time.

### **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STORY VERSIONS WHICH OCCUR WITHIN EPISODES**

While thus far I have concentrated on the omission or variation of episodes in terms of a story version's overall structure -- i.e., where the episodes do or do not occur in the story and what effect such variation has on the story -- I would now like to look at variations and other features of Brian's storytelling which occur *within* episodes. Such features include the expansion or compression of details within episodes and the rehearsal and repetition of incidents within stories, as well as the borrowing of incidents or motifs from one story to another. While the above discussion

concentrating on variations at the episodic level naturally led to a consideration of structural features of storytelling such as logical links and the relationship between structure and memory, the discussion of variation *within* episodes leads to the consideration of more general features of storytelling, such as, for instance, the importance of repetition as a storytelling device.

### **Expansion or Compression of Details and the Role of Repetition**

I have already discussed the phenomenon of optional repeat episodes, and indicated the way in which details or motifs may be expanded or condensed by the storyteller. The discussion thus far has explored the way in which such an expandable or repeatable detail or motif which occurs at the episodic level of the story can serve as a mechanism by which the storyteller may expand or contract the story without damaging its structural integrity or inherent logic. The use of repetition in this way is one of the most salient feature of Gaelic storytelling; as I have already noted, Bruford points out that repetition and expansion of details is "the simplest way to get the maximum effect out of a motif...." (1969: 210). It is not surprising then that in addition to the kinds of repetition already discussed, Brian also uses repetition for details or motifs which occur *within* episodes. Thus it is that an incident may be repeated to lengthen the story and contribute to the pace and sense of suspense which the storyteller seeks to create.

When examining Brian's stories in order to see what, if anything, we can learn from his use of repetition within episodes, the most striking pattern which emerges is *not* Brian's use of repetition, but rather his use of compression. Just as repetition can be used to lengthen a story (and in a sense can be seen as one of the most generative mechanisms of storytelling), so compression -- the choice *not* to repeat motifs or details -- is one of the storyteller's most effective tools when seeking to shorten the story. So it is that there are a number of examples of motifs which Brian chooses not to repeat in some of his story versions. The most striking point about these examples is that, with the exception of just one of them, they all occur in the later recordings, i.e., the ones made in the 1990s. Thus it is mostly in the later recordings that Brian reduces his use of repetition, thereby shortening his stories, which reconfirms the supposition that context and old age may have a direct effect on Brian's storytelling, and that the later, briefer recordings are an indication of such an effect. The main examples of the loss of repetition of a motif occur in versions of *Stòiridh Loircein* and *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'*, and I shall briefly discuss each of these in turn.



### *Stòiridh Loircein*

In *Stòiridh Loircein*, Episode 3 involves the hero travelling to an underground region where he visits three castles in turn, asking at each one for his father's stolen teeth. At the first two castles (first a copper and then a silver castle -- details which help the storyteller to remember that there are three castles in all) Loircean kills the giants, but at one of these castles the giant's wife warns him that he will not be able to kill the giant of the golden castle by straightforward combat. She tells him that instead he must pretend to be a mender of bows and then shoot the giant in a mole which is on his forehead. As I have already noted, the use of repetition -- i.e., repeated similar visits to first the copper castle and then the silver one before finally reaching the gold one -- is to be expected in such a scenario, and certainly would contribute to the suspense and pacing of the story. However, if one wanted to shorten the story without omitting information vital to the plot, we can guess that this could be done by omitting one of the repeat adventures at one of the castles, and this is indeed what Brian does. His 1995 version is particularly interesting, for Brian actually mentions all three castles, but then condenses the adventure at the second (silver) castle by summarising the event briefly. Thus after telling about the first castle, Brian says:

Ach, dar a ruig e ... nis an caisteal airgid, 's bha, bha an aon rud aig' ri dhèanamh sin. Bha aig' ris a' fomhair a mharbhadh 's. Bha boireannach ann 's thug e leis a' boireannach, a' bhean cuide ris. Bha nis dithisd aig', an tè bha 'sa chaisteal, eh, chopair, 's a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal airgid.  
Bha e nis 'dol gus a' chaisteal òir.

*[But, when he reached ... now the silver castle, and he had, he had to do the same thing there. He had to kill the giant and. There was a woman there, and he took the woman, the wife with him. Now he had a pair, the woman who was in the the, eh, copper castle, and the one who was in the silver castle. Now he was going to the golden castle.]*

This is an excellent example of how Brian is fully aware of the details of the story, but chooses not to repeat the incident in full. In contrast, Brian's 1974 version of this story is much fuller and makes use of some of the same set language when the hero approaches both the copper and the silver castles. It is worth pointing out, however, that even in the 1974 version, Brian's telling makes it clear that he is aware of the importance of repetition and its role in telling this story. Here he says:

'S char e sin, Loircean, chum e roimhe gus an tàinig e gus a' chaisteal airgid.  
'S dar ruig e, dar a ruig e an caisteal airgid, *rinn e an dearbh rud ann a' sin*,  
thug e glaoth aig a' doras, fìaclan an athar chur mach. Agus, chuir am fear



bha mach — an fheadhainn bha staigh a-mach airson an ceann chur dhe Loircean, 's thoir a-staigh dha. Ach *rinn Loircean an dearbh rud air an fheadhainn sin*, rug e air a' fear bu mhoth' ceann, agus bu chaoile cas dhiubh. [*Emphasis mine.*]

[*And then he went, Loircean, he kept on until he came to the silver castle. And when he arrived, when he reached the silver castle, he did the same thing there, he gave a call at the dor, to send out his father's teeth. And, the man who was outside sent -- the ones who were inside out in order to take Loircean's head off, and bring it inside to him. But Loircean did the same thing to those ones, he seized the one who had the biggest head, and the slimmest leg. [*Emphasis mine.*]*

As can be seen from the underlined sections, Brian makes it clear that he is repeating the incident as already told with regard to the first castle. This is similar to the way in which Brian condenses the detail in the 1995 version by saying "*bha an aon rud aig' ri dhèanamh sin*" ("he had to do the same thing there"), the main difference being that in 1974 Brian goes on to repeat the actual content of the incident. His repeated statements that Loircean "did the same thing" may give further insight as to how the storyteller's mind is working, for it may be his way of helping himself to tell the story properly. Certainly the conscious articulation of the fact that the incident is repeated shows an awareness of this mechanism on the part of the storyteller.

The 1994 recording adds another dimension to our understanding of repetition and compression. This recording is actually a conversation *about* the story, in the course of which Brian tells me the main incidents of the story -- it is something of a cross between an actual telling and a summary told in conversation.<sup>58</sup> Here he again makes clear that Loircean must visit three castles, but he only tells about the first (copper) castle and the last (gold) one. The recording is as follows:

**B.S.:** Loircean. And, eh. Then before they would get to the castle where the ... teeth were, they had to go down in a lift.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm. *Cliabhag*.<sup>59</sup>

**B.S.:** Underground.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

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<sup>58</sup>Brian is often unable to discuss a story without telling it. Thus it is that many times I have asked him questions about a story, only to have him start telling it in the course of his answer. Compare this to the comments in Chapter Three about the way in which a storyteller may often be unable to think about a story without going through all of it.

<sup>59</sup>A kind of creel or basket, and the name which Brian gives to the lift in the story.

**B.S.:** And there was --

**C.Z.:** Underground?

**B.S.:** Underground.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** Eh, there was a gold castle, and a silver castle, and a copper one.

**C.Z.:** And were the castles underground?

**B.S.:** Aye, they were on the, on the ground.

**C.Z.:** *On* the ground, or underneath the ground?

**B.S.:** On the ground, aye, but you had to go underground to get to them.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** So, thuirt Loircean riuth', "Nis, am bheil si' ag iarraidh fìaclan ar athar, feumaidh sibh dol gus a' chaisteal, agus a' fomhair fhaicinn. Tha iad a's a' chaisteal òir.

[*So, Loircean said to them, "Now, do you want our father's teeth, you have to go to the castle, and see the giant. They're in the gold castle."*]

**C.Z.:** Tha. [*Yes.*]

**B.S.:** They were not going down the, the lift. Bha iad [*They were*] -- Loircean went down the lift, and --

**C.Z.:** -- mmm hmm --

**B.S.:** He came to the, to the castle then. He gave a shout to put his father's teeth out.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** And a long big giant came out, and [ ] Loircean was fighting but, Loircean knocked him over then, took his sword out and, whipped his head off. And he got his father's teeth.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Then he went to the -- aye. He went to the, before he got there, he met the wife, he met this, eh, giant's wife. And she says, "Oh," she says, "if he'll see you, he'll kill you." She says, "Come in. Come in," she says. And she hid him. [*Continues with description of how Loircean tricks the giant in the gold castle.*]<sup>60</sup>

Thus Brian clearly states that there are three castles, but he also feels comfortable omitting the repeat details of the second (silver) castle. Again, as this recording is of a conversation about the story, interspersed with narrated pieces of the story, it seems

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<sup>60</sup>1 July 1994, Tape 1 of 1.

that it is the *context* of the situation which has a direct effect on Brian's use of repetition, here causing him not to include the repetition of the castle incident.

### ***Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn': Another Example of Compression***

The story of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* also provides an example of compression. In Episode 4 of the story, Oisean returns to the realm of the Fèinn, bringing a servant boy with him to help him. Once they reach this realm, Oisean causes large deer to appear by shouting very loudly. Before shouting, he makes the servant boy dig a hole and put his head in it -- presumably to protect him from the damage that Oisean's extremely loud shout might otherwise cause. This happens three times, and each time when Oisean is finished he tells the boy to lift up his head. The boy says he cannot do so, for he feels that his head will burst. Oisean again tells the boy to lift his head, which he eventually does. This exchange is characterised by the use of set dialogue which is stable across most of the versions, and is followed by the appearance of a herd of deer, each larger than the previous herd. After the third shout Oisean determines that the deer are large enough for his purposes, and the story continues.

As might be expected, this detail of the three shouts is condensed in some of Brian's versions. While his 1958 and 1979 versions contain three incidents of shouting, the 1973 version has only two shouts, while the 1993 and 1995 versions only have one shouting incident each. Here again we see condensation occurring most markedly in the later versions, and we may conclude that the examples from both *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* and *Stòiridh Loircein* again point to the importance of repetition or compression as a storytelling mechanism, as well as indicating that the storytelling context may have a strong effect on the storyteller's performance.

### **Rehearsal of Dialogue Within Stories**

Related to the use of repetition is the phenomenon whereby conversations are rehearsed within a story before they actually occur. For instance, one character may be advising another character about a particular course of action, and the first character tells the second character what to say or do when the particular situation arises. Thus we again find repetition at work, for the conversations or incidents are usually repeated in much the same way as in the initially rehearsed version. However, just as a motif or detail is not always repeated, it is also the case that conversations may be rehearsed and repeated in one telling of a story, but not in another telling.

### ***Example of Rehearsed Dialogue: Stòiridh Loircean 1974***

In the 1974 version of *Stòiridh Loircean* we have an instance in which a woman from the second castle which Loircean visits instructs him as to how to proceed when he reaches the third (golden) castle. In the following excerpt, she instructs Loircean as to what to do and say when he encounters the third giant:

"O," thuirt i, "mus fholbh thu, mus tèid thu gus a', gus a' chaisteal, uh, òir. 'Se a' fear sin," thuirt i, " 'se fear cianail a th'ann, 's cha dèan thu *stem* dheth. Ach," thuirt i ris, "eh, bhrìst e a' bogha-saighead aig'." Agus, eh, thuirt i ris, "Dar a thèid thus' ann, bidh thus' ... b'ios thu 'càradh bhoghachan-saighead. Agus, dar a chàras thu 'bogha-saighead aig', their es' riut ... eh, their thus' ris, 'Dè air a' feuch mi e?' 'O, feuch orm fhèin e, feuch orm fhèin e,' their es'." Agus thuirt i ris, "Tha ball-dòbhran, air a' bhathais aig'. 'S ma gheobh thus'," thuirt i, "a' saighead, gun urr' dhut chur a's a' bhall-dòbhran, marbhas thu e. Ach shin an aon rathad, nì thu -- cur às dha."  
"O," thuirt Loircean rith', "mòran taing," thuirt e s'. "Feuch' mis' ris a' rud as fheàrr is urra' dhomh air."<sup>61</sup>

*["Oh," she said, "before you leave, before you go to the, to the castle, uh, of gold. The man there," she said, "he's a terrible man, and you won't be able to do anything to him. But," she said to him, "eh, he broke his bow." And, uh, she said to him. "When you go there, you'll be ... you'll be mending bows. And, when you mend his bow, he'll say to you ... eh, you say to him, 'What shall I try it on?' 'Oh, try it on myself, try it on myself,' he'll say." And she said to him, "There's a mole, on his forehead. And if you get," she said, "the arrow, if you can put it in the mole, you'll kill him. But that's the only way, you'll do -- [you'll] kill him."*  
*"Oh," said Loircean to her, "many thanks," said he. "I'll try as best as I can."]*

Following this conversation, Loircean proceeds as directed by the woman, and manages to kill the giant. Here Brian fleshes out the incident with more details and dialogue, and he also includes a close repetition of the conversation between Loircean and the giant as dictated by the woman from the silver castle. The conversation is as follows:

*[Following on after Loircean kills the giant's men and the giant himself comes out from the castle:]*  
O bha Loircean 'dol air chrith.  
"O," thuirt e, "na beanibh dhomh, na beanibh dhomh, na beanibh dhomh. Chual' mi fuaim aig a' chaisteal, 's cha robh fhios a'm gu dè 'm fuaim bh'ann."  
" 'S dè tha thus' 'dèanamh seo?"

<sup>61</sup>School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1974/27/A-B1.



"O," thuirt e, "cha robh mis' ach 'càradh bhoghachan-saighead." Thuirt e, "Tha mis' a' càradh bhoghachan-saighead."

"O, ma tha," thuirt e, " 's tus' an t-aon fear tha mi ag iarraidh. Bhreis mis', eh, 'm bogh' agam," thuirt e s'. "Thig a-staigh," thuirt e, "gus an càirich thu e."

Chaidh sin Loircean staigh 's, chàirich e 'm bogh' aig', agus, eh, dar bha e ullaimh, thog Loircean, chuir e a' saighead ann, thuirt e, "Chan eil fhios a'm, cò air a feu-- air a feuch mi e?"

"Och," thuirt am fomhair ris, "feuch orm fhèin e. Feuch orm-as e."

"Och, chan fheuch, chan fheuch mi ort e. Nach--"

"Och, cha bhean e, cha dèan e dad orm-as. Cha, cha dhrùidh orm-as."

Ach, thug sin Loircean, ghobh e *aim* dheth 's, thàinig osag bheag dhen a' ghaoth 's, chuir i 'n dosan aig an fhomhair air ais, 's chunnaic e a' ball-dòbhran 's, [...]. 'S dar a leig e às e, chuir e dìreach, uh, troimhn a' bhall-dòbhran e 's, mharbh e a' fomhair.

*[Following on after Loircean kills the giant's men and the giant himself comes out from the castle:*

*Oh Loircean was shaking.*

*"Oh," he said, "don't harm me, don't harm me, don't harm me. I heard a noise at the castle, and I didn't know what the noise was."*

*"And what are you doing here?"*

*"Oh," he said, "I was only mending bows." He said, "I am mending bows."*

*"Oh, then," he said, "you are the one man who I'm wanting. I broke, eh, my bow," he said and. "Come in," he said, "so that you can fix it."*

*Loircean went inside then and, he fixed his bow, and, eh, when he was finished, Loircean lifted, he put the arrow in, he said, "I do not know, on whom will -- on whom will I try it?"*

*"Och," said the giant to him, "try it on myself. Try it on myself."*

*"Och, no, I will not try it on you. Won't--"*

*"Och, it won't harm, it won't do a thing to me. It won't, it won't penetrate me."*

*But, then Loircean put, he took aim of him and, a little gust of the wind came and, it blew the giant's fringe [i.e., the hair on his forehead] back, and he saw the mole and, [...]. And when he fired it, he put it right, uh, through the mole and, he killed the giant.]*

This example is notable both for the way in which material is repeated, thus serving to lengthen the story (an easy way to make a story longer without having to remember extra content), and also for the way in which Brian expands the rest of the incident and provides details not included in the initial rehearsal of the incident as performed by the woman from the silver castle. An especially nice touch is the way in which Brian describes Loircean as shaking with fright when the big giant emerges from his castle, and pleading with him not to harm him. Thus we have an instance of repetition coupled with the expansion of details, and it is worth noting how



effectively and powerfully such techniques can be used in order to retain and re-tell a story. It is also useful to note that in Brian's other versions of *Stòiridh Loircein*, the woman from the castle does warn Loircean of how to proceed, but in these instances she does not rehearse the actual conversation between Loircean and the giant.

***Further Examples: Am Maraiche Màirneal and Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh***

Further examples of rehearsal within stories are found in *Am Maraiche Màirneal* as well as in *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh*. In *Am Maraiche Màirneal*, all four of Brian's versions (one from 1974, one from 1993 and two from 1995) include an incident in which the hen-wife gives her son instructions about what to say to the hero in order to trick him into believing that his wife has been unfaithful, and in two of these versions -- 1974 and September 1995 -- the rehearsed conversation is repeated in the incident which follows. In the other two versions Brian simply says that the hen-wife's son does as instructed by telling the hero that which has already been rehearsed between the hen-wife and her son, and proceeds with the next section of the story. Thus for example in the September 1993 recording, instead of repeating the dialogue as already rehearsed, Brian simply narrates the incident with the words "'s dh'innis e seo dha" ("and he told him this") and continues with the story without further expansion. In contrast to this brief treatment, the versions which do repeat the rehearsed conversation are notable for the colourful way in which Brian expands the repeated incident. For instance, in the September 1995 version the hen-wife tells her son that he can make the hero leave the kingdom by telling him that he (the hen-wife's son) knows that the hero's wife has a golden comb and a golden nipple. The hen-wife's son does as instructed, and expands the conversation by telling the hero that he was in bed with his wife, thus giving the story a comical and lively twist. The hen-wife's initial instructions to her son are as follows:

[*The hen-wife to her son:*]

"Tha fhios agam-as air a' bhean," thuirt i. "Tha mi ... 'ga cìreadh 's ag obair oirr' a h-uile latha. Tha cìr òir aic'," thuirt i, "airson a' cìreadh a ceann, 's tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic'. 'S innis thu sin dha-as," thuirt is, "agus .... bios an t-àit' agad-as."<sup>62</sup>

[*The hen-wife to her son:*]

[*"I know about the wife," she said. "I ... comb her and work on her every day. She has a golden comb," she said, "for combing her head, and there's a golden tip on her breast. And you tell that to him [i.e., the woman's husband], " she said, "and .... the place will be yours."*]

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<sup>62</sup>18 September 1995, Tape 1 of 1.

However, when Brian re-tells this conversation he expands it and in so doing gives it more detail and makes it more interesting:

'S aon de na lathaichean bha iad mach 's, bha an dithis bhalaich cuideach 's thuirt e ris an fhear eil', thuirt e bh-- ... "Tha bean bhrèagha agad."

"O," thuirt e, "tha bean bhrèagha a'am."

"Uill, ma tha i cho brèagha sin," thuirt e, "an inns' mis' dhut e. Tha cea-- tha cìr òir aic', òir aic', airson a bhith 'cìreadh 'ceann, 's tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic'."

"Ciamar tha fhios agad-s' air sin?"

"O tha fhios agam," thuirt e, "bha mis' a's a' leabaidh cuide rith'."

*[And one day they were outside and, the pair of boys were together and he said to the other one, he said -- "You have a lovely wife."*

*"Oh," he said, "I have a lovely wife."*

*"Well, if she's that lovely," he said, "will I tell it to you. She has a tip-- a golden, a golden comb, for combing her head, and there's a golden tip on her breast."*

*"How do you know that?"*

*"Oh I know," he said, "I was in bed with her."]*

In this instance the use of repeated rehearsed dialogue occurs in both an early version (1974) and a late version (September 1995), while there is no repetition in the 1993 and March 1995 versions. Thus while this may not lead to any conclusions about what effect context or age may have on Brian's storytelling, these examples do further illustrate how the mechanisms of repetition and expansion contribute to the storytelling dynamic.

### ***Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh***

*Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh* also contains instances of rehearsed dialogue and action, first when the eponymous black horse instructs his master as to how to locate the heroine of the story, and later in the story when the black horse tells his master how to return to the heroine's island in order to steal her shaggy dun filly. In this case, all five versions of the story versions (two from 1974, one from 1975, and two from 1993) contain the rehearsal and full versions of the following incident, once again with colourful expansion of the language and details. Again, this reinforces the impression that along with the repetition of episodes (as discussed in the section on "Expansion or Compression of Details," as well as in the section on "Optional Repeat Episodes" above), the technique of repetition is further developed through the use of

rehearsed and expanded incidents and dialogue within episodes, and that repetition in its many guises is one of Brian's most important tools for telling a story.

### **SHARING OF MATERIAL BETWEEN STORIES**

Another feature which emerges when the stories are summarised and plotted is the use of similar material in more than one story. While such a phenomenon is not unusual in Gaelic storytelling in general, the sharing of characters, motifs or incidents between stories is rare in Brian's storytelling. We shall consider in turn the various types and instances of shared material, beginning with the borrowing or sharing of characters and motifs between stories.<sup>63</sup>

#### **Shared Characters and Motifs**

It is uncommon in Brian's recorded storytelling for motifs and characters to occur in more than one story, but this does happen on occasion. There are only a handful of examples, which we shall now consider in turn.

#### ***The Well-Travelled Maraiche***

The only named character who appears in more than one story is the *Maraiche Màirneal*, an old sailor who usually appears in the aptly titled *Am Maraiche Màirneal* (which, according to Brian, is his favourite story).<sup>64</sup> In this story the *Maraiche* helps the enchanted hero by taking him in his ship to *Eilean Loch Leug* ("the Island of Loch Leug"), where there is a woman who might help to remove a magic snake from around his neck. The *Maraiche*, however, also appears in the September 1993 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* and in the 1994 recording of *Stòiridh Loircein*.

#### ***The Maraiche in Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 1993***

The September 1993 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* is a most striking example of borrowing, for here we see material which obviously belongs to one story being imported into another story. In the story of *Am Maraiche Màirneal* proper, what usually happens is that the *Maraiche* gives the hero permission to use his boat,

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<sup>63</sup>The issue of similar or formulaic *language* which appears in more than one story, as opposed to motifs, characters or incidents, is discussed separately in the section on "Language" (below). It should be pointed out, however, that there is some overlap between such areas as the use of motifs and the use of formulaic language, as one often accompanies the other.

<sup>64</sup>I here make the distinction between "named characters" -- i.e., a character with a specific name -- and stock characters such as *Cailleach nan Cearc* ("The Hen-Wife"), the latter of which are discussed below.

but the hero finds that he cannot move it himself and comes back to the *Maraiche* for help. The *Maraiche* then tells the hero to help him put his shoulder to the prow of the boat, and the *Maraiche* then succeeds in putting the boat out to sea. They then reach their destination and when they do, the woman of the island looks out and, using set dialogue, says that she believes she sees the mast of the boat of the *Maraiche Mairneal* coming over the horizon one more time. This is how Brian tells the incident in the recording of *Am Maraiche Mairneal* in 1974:

"Och," thuirt am Maraich' riuth', "chan urr' dhomh-as èirigh às a' leabaidh, 's chan urr' dhomh dad dhèanamh, ach tha bàt' ann a' sin, 's ma chuireas si' fhèin mach air flod i, tha si' di-beatht' airson a faighinn."

Char aid sin bhàn gus a' bhàt' 's, dh'fheuch iad cur mach air, air a' mhuir ach, och, cha dèanadh aid -- cha ghluaisedh iad i. Thàinig aid sin air ais 's, thuirt iad ris nach dèanadh iad dad dhen a' bhàt', nach b'urr' dhoibh cur mach.

"Ach uill," thuirt a' Maraich' riuth', "feuch am faic si' mo thriùbhsair."

Thug e sin dha a thriùbhsair 's, char e staigh 'na thriùbhsair 's, chuir e 'aodach air 's, thug iad bhàn gus a' bhàt' e.

'S dar thug iad bhàn gus a' bhàt' e, "Nis," thuirt e, "cuiribh mo ghualann ris a' chuinnlean aic'."

Chuir iad sin a ghuallean ris a' chuinnlean aic', 's thug e aon tilgeil dhith 's chuir e trì fad fhèin mach air a' mhuir i. Agus. Dh'fholbh iad an sin, 's bha iad 'dèanamh gu bàrr Eilean Loch Lèug.

'S dar a chunnaic a' bhean, "O, uill," thuirt i, "thig e às an iarrach no às uarach, ach shin agai' bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaiche Mhàirneil 'tighinn aon uair fhathast."

'S bha i sin mach, 's bha i 'dèanamh *welcome* ris a' Mharaich'.

*["Och," said the Maraich' to them, "I cannot get out of the bed, and I cannot do a thing, but there's a boat over there, and if you yourselves put it out afloat, you're welcome to have it."*

*They went down then to the boat and, they tried to put it out on, on the sea but, och, they couldn't do -- they couldn't move it. They came back and, they said to him, they couldn't do a thing with the boat, they couldn't put it out [to sea].*

*"Och well," said the Maraich' to them, "see if you can find my trousers."*

*Then he gave him his trousers and, he put his trousers on and, he put his clothes on and, they took him down to the boat.*

*And when they took him down to the boat, "Now," he said, "put my shoulder to her prow."*

*They put his shoulder to her prow, and he gave one cast to her and he put her three [boat] lengths out on the sea. And. They left then, and they were making for the tip of the Island of Loch Leug.*

*And when the woman saw, "Oh, well," she said, "it may come from any which way, but there you have the top of the mast of the ship of the Seaworthy Mariner coming one more time."*



*And then she was out, and she was making a welcome for the Mariner.]*<sup>65</sup>

Now, compare the above with the following passage from Brian's September 1993 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*:

Thàinig an sin, gu' robh iad 'dol gu bàrr Eilean na' Muc, 's cò gheobhadh aid -- a' bàt' gheobhadh, o, am Maraiche Màirneal. Char iad gus a' Maraich', bha a' Maraich', bha e dall.

Thuirt a' Maraich' riuth' gu' faigheadh aid a' bhàt', "Thoir leis am bàt'," thuirt e ri', "tha i ann a' siud, [...] aig a' chladach i. Cuiribh fhèin mach i. Tha i bhàn aig a' chladach."

Ach, char aid a dh'fheuch', cha dèanadh aid *stem* dhen a' bhàt' chur mach, air a', air flod.

Thàinig e sin air ais 'ga iarraidh rithistich, a' rìgh 's. Thuirt e ris, "Cha tèid sin -- chan urr' dhuinn am bàt' a ghluas'd."

"Uill, uill," thuirt e, "thoir leis mi, thoir leis air làimh mi."

Thug e sin leis a' Maraich' air làimh, 's thug e gus a' chladach e.

'S thuirt a' Maraich' ris, "Cuir mo ghualainn ri cuinnlean a' bhàt'."

Chuir e a ghualainn ri cuinnlean a' bhàt', 's thug e a' chiad [*shove*] chuir e trì fad fhèin mach air a' flod i.

"Nis," thuirt es'.

Dh'fholbh iad nis, nis bha ... a' tè bha am bàrr Eilean na' Muc, a' bhean a bh'ann, bha i 'sealltainn mach air an uinneig gu h-àird, 's thuirt i ri 'nighean, "Cha chreid mis'," thuirt i, "nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach 'Mharaiche Mhàirneal' tighinn aon uair fhathastaich."

'S thàinig e, 'se a' Maraich' a bh'ann.

*[It came [to be] then, that they were going to the tip of "Eilean nam Muc" ("the Isle of Pigs"), and who would they get -- the boat [they] would get, oh, the Maraiche Màirneal. They went to the Maraiche, the Maraiche, he was blind.*

*The Maraiche said to them that they would get the boat, "Get the boat," he said to him, "she's over there, [...] at the shore. Put her out yourselves. She's down at the shore."*

*But, they went to try, they couldn't do a thing to get the boat out, on the, afloat.*

*He came back then asking him again, the king and. He said to him, "That won't go -- we cannot move the boat."*

*"Well, well," he said, "take me, take me by the hand."*

*Then he took the Maraiche by the hand, and he took him to the shore.*

*And the Maraiche said to him, "Put my shoulder to the prow of the boat."*

*He put his shoulder to the prow of the boat, and he gave the first [*shove*] to her and he put her afloat three [boat] lengths [out to sea].*

*"Now," he said.*

<sup>65</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/26.



*They left now, now there was ... the woman who was in the tip of Eilean nam Muc, the woman who was there, she was looking out the window up high, and she said to her daughter, "I believe," said she, "that that's the top of the mast of the boat of the Maraiche Màirneal coming one more time."  
And he came, it was the Maraiche Màirneal.]*

Comparing these two passages, it is clear that Brian is using the same material in each story. Further, it is clear that the material comes from *Am Maraiche Màirneal*, as the *Maraiche* surely belongs to the story whose title bears his name. Thus we have a clear instance of borrowing from one story to another, and not only is the character borrowed, but an entire set incident is lifted. The implications of this for Brian's storytelling are significant, for the major feature of Brian's storytelling which has emerged thus far is the relative *stability* of the stories and his conviction that they must be told correctly, in the same way each time. Whether or not this particular occasion was an anomalous departure on Brian's part, it does show that Brian is capable of manipulating set material in this way, which in turn implies that it is a practice to which he may well have been exposed. However, this instance of the borrowing of a large section of fixed material from one story to another seems to be unique in Brian's recorded storytelling. Considering some of his other comments on storytelling -- particularly those which indicate that the story must be told in a fixed way -- I find this instance to be quite astounding. It of course supports the notion that Gaelic storytellers were in the habit of drawing freely on a stock of fixed material, which they could use to ornament or lengthen their stories as desired. Such a practice is not in dispute and most commentators on the Gaelic storyteller (Delargy 1945, Bruford 1969, 1983, 1987, Campbell 1860, O' Nolan 1987, to name a few) seem to take it for granted that this was indeed the case. However, to find Brian sharing material in this way is most surprising, all the more so as it occurs for the first time in his recorded stories when he is 82 years old. Rather than concluding that this represents a rare occasion on which Brian manipulates traditional material more freely than usual, it could also be supposed that this instance represents a lapse of memory or a slip-up on Brian's part. My field notes show that the recording was made in the sitting-room of Brian's nursing home, in a noisy distracting atmosphere, while most of the other recordings were made in Brian's own room, where we were not disturbed by noise or by the presence of other people; perhaps it is the case that the noisy atmosphere distracted Brian and caused him to momentarily lose his train of thought. Whatever the true explanation, the fact that this instance of the borrowing of a large section of material from one story to another is unique in Brian's recorded stories actually serves to emphasise Brian's conservatism as a storyteller; this, in turn,

may be due, at least in part, to his lack of exposure to a wide range of storytelling and storytellers (for with each storyteller one hears, one is exposed to more and more stock material used in different contexts) and to his relative lack of storytelling practice for most of his adult life.

### *The Maraiche in Stòiridh Loircean 1994*

There is one more piece of evidence connected to this question of Brian's conception of the *Maraiche* and his understanding of how traditional material may be used. In July 1994 I recorded a conversation with Brian in which we discussed *Stòiridh Loircean*. I was again surprised to hear him say that the *Maraiche* played a part in this story. The excerpted conversation was as follows:

[B.S. and C.Z. are discussing the character *Loircean*.]

C.Z.: And why would he be sitting in the -- in ashes? Where would he be sitting in --

B.S.: Well now that's where you got -- well, if they have an outside fire, you know --

C.Z.: -- uh huh --

B.S.: -- and the ashes scattered around them.

C.Z.: Uh huh.

B.S.: He could [settle] them. His kilt, he would be wearing a kilt, you see --

C.Z.: Ah ha. And "kilt" is --

B.S.: That's, uh, the same story as the *Maraich'*.

C.Z.: As the *Maraich'*?

B.S.: The *Ma--* is it, wait 'til I see --

C.Z.: As the *Maraiche Màirneal*, no?

B.S.: Aye.

C.Z.: Is it?

B.S.: Yes, it's the -- well, he's in, he comes in there, into that story too, because it's the *Maraich'* that put them away, across with his boat to the island where he --

C.Z.: -- uh huh --

B.S.: *Loircean* got his father's teeth again.

C.Z.: So is it the *Maraiche Màirneal* who takes him away in the boat?

B.S.: Aye, he took the men away in the boat.<sup>66</sup>

[*Conversation continues.*]

Here again we have Brian asserting quite clearly that the *Maraiche Màirneal* plays a role in a different story, this time *Stòiridh Loircean*. It is slightly harder to take Brian's comments at face value here, for in the three other existing recordings of *Stòiridh*

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<sup>66</sup>1 July 1994, Tape 1 of 1.

*Loircein* (one from 1974, one from 1993, and one from 1995), there is no mention of the *Maraiche Màirneal*. We cannot, however, discount our storyteller's words, for it seems likely that he must have some experience of hearing the *Maraiche* in more than one story. Still, I find it difficult to reconcile Brian's usual concern with telling a story "correctly" with the seeming ease with which he here asserts that the *Maraiche* plays a role in a hitherto unrelated story. It is worth noting that in the 1974 version of *Stòiridh Loircein*, the hero is rescued by a passing boat at this point in the story and we may surmise that Brian has retained this detail of the story in his memory; if so, perhaps it is the case that the coincidence of the appearance of a boatman and Brian's knowledge of the *Maraiche* character here cause an unusual (for Brian) conflation of similar material.

Finally, it is interesting to note that of the categories of runs often found in Gaelic storytelling, sea travel formulae are mentioned by both O' Nolan (1987: 472 and following) and Bruford (1969: 188-193) as being one of the most popular types of run used by Gaelic storytellers.<sup>67</sup> Could it be then that Brian's apparent acceptance of the *Maraiche* as a character who may appear in more than one story in order to facilitate sea travel may actually reflect the often stereotyped depiction of sea travel in Gaelic storytelling? Seen in this context, we could then cautiously treat this set incident as a sea run (albeit a short one), and add it to Brian's only other long run, the battle run which appears in both *Stòiridh Ladhair* and *Stòiridh Loircein* and which is discussed in the next section. According to Bruford, the battle run is the most popular run in Irish storytelling (1969: 184) and the sea run is "almost as popular as battle and arming runs, perhaps even more so...." (1969: 188): perhaps then it is no coincidence that Brian's only long runs concern battle and -- possibly -- sea travel.

### **Shared Episodic Runs**

While long runs are often cited as being a distinguishing characteristic of Gaelic storytelling (e.g. Delargy 1945: 208-209, O' Nolan 1987), Brian's storytelling is notable for the absence of such long formulae. There is, however, one episode-long "set piece" which occurs in two of Brian's stories, *Stòiridh Ladhair* and *Stòiridh Loircein*, which for the purposes of this discussion I shall refer to as an "episodic run".<sup>68</sup> As Alan Bruford points out, long runs are themselves composed of shorter stock phrases which, in his words, "may be put together to form a run or used

<sup>67</sup>Cf. Craig 1944: 27 for a sea run which incorporates imagery similar to that used by Brian.

<sup>68</sup>This set piece is discussed in a different context in the section on "Similar Episodes Forgotten or Omitted" above.

separately" (1969: 37). This is exactly how I would characterise Brian's episodic run: while his use of set material is usually confined to the "shorter stock phrases" which are not full-fledged runs in themselves, here we have the combination of several shorter set elements to form an extended set piece.<sup>69</sup> This is the only such extended set piece which occurs in Brian's repertoire, and as such it is of great interest.

### *The Episodic Run in Stòiridh Ladhair and Stòiridh Loircean*

To turn to the material itself, the run concerns the hero's approach to a giant's castle, his request for the object which he is seeking, his combat with first the giant's men and then with the giant himself, and finally, the defeat of the giant by the hero. In *Stòiridh Ladhair*, the run is used in Episode 5, the king's quest for "*ceann fear agus filidh*" (literally "the head of a man and a poet," the term used in the story for the head of a giant which the king must obtain). Here the king approaches the giant's castle and calls out for the head, after which he fights with first the giant's men and then the giant. In *Stòiridh Loircean*, the run appears in Episode 3, and is repeated up to three times. Here Loircean is seeking not a giant's head, but his father's stolen teeth, and he must visit three successive castles, calling out for his father's teeth at each one. Here, again, the set battle piece is used when Loircean fights the giant and his men at the castles. While the pieces are used in much the same context (the seeking of an object from a giant's castle), it is interesting to note that the stories are clearly different and that the objects sought are also different. Thus our storyteller is capable of using the same basic incident in more than one story.

It is useful to examine the run as it occurs in both stories. The first example comes from the 1978 version of *Stòiridh Ladhair*:

Agus, char e gus a' chaisteal bha seo. Eh, thug e leum 's beum aig' a' doras, 's thuit e riuth' ceann fear agus filidh chur mach na deagh chòmhrag air a shon. Rinn a' fomhair mòr bha staigh, rinn e gàir.  
 "Ruith' mach, 'fhearaibh," thuit e, "agus thoiribh staigh ceann 'n fhear bheag tha sin dhomh-as, gus a' bi mi 'cluich balla-bùird 's magaidh leis."  
 Thàinig -- dh'fholbh an fheadh-- dhe 'chuid daoine' mach, 's thug Fionn (*sic*) òg, thug e sùil orr'-s', 's rug e air a' fear bu chaoil' cas agus bu mhoth' ceann, agus sgleog e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil' leis.

<sup>69</sup>Kevin O' Nolan (1975) uses the term "formulaic passage" to refer to a similar type of set piece. Saying that neither "formula" nor "run" is quite right, he opts for "formulaic passage," saying that like Lord's "themes," formulaic passages are "groups of ideas regularly used in telling a tale'...." (236). He also states that a formulaic passage " ... is something more than a 'run'. It may include several runs" (244). While the term "episodic run" suffices for my own discussion, it is clear that further refinement of the terminology used to discuss Gaelic storytelling would be helpful to scholars.



Agus, dar a chunnaic a' sin a' fomhair nach robh gin 'tighinn staigh, "Ooo," thuirt e ris fhèin, "tha feagal orm gu' beil 'm fear beag tha a-mach, gu' bheil e sgaiteach."

'S thàinig e fhèin nis mach, dh'fheuchainn buill' agus a' rìgh òg. Agus, dar a thàinig, char iad sin 'na chèil' 's, bha iad 'dol mu' cuairt air a chèil' 's. Ach smaoinich a' rìgh òg gu' feumadh e seo a dhèanamh 's, thug e 'n togail mhòr, èibhinn, aighearach dhan fhomhair, 's chuir e ri talamh e 's, gheàrr e 'n ceann dheth, leis 'chladheamh aig'. Chuir e sin 'n ceann ann am pòc' air a' mhuin 's leum e air muin 'loth' aig', 's shìn e air tilleachainn dhachaidh.<sup>70</sup>

*[And, he went to this castle. Eh, he gave a leap and a blow at the door, and he said to them to either send out 'ceann fear agus filidh' (i.e., the head of the giant) or [to provide] good combat for it. The big giant who was inside laughed.*

*"Run out, men," he said, "and bring in the head of that little man to me, so that I may play with it as a butt of derision and mockery."*

*[They] came -- they left -- some of his men [went] out, and young Fionn (sic) looked at them, and he seized upon the man with the slimmest leg and the largest head, and he knocked the brains out of the other ones with him [i.e., he used the man as a club with which to kill the other men].*

*And, when the giant saw then that no one was coming in, "Ohhh," he said to himself, "I'm afraid that the little man who is outside, that he's angry."*

*And he himself came out now, trying to strike the young king. And, when they came, they went together [i.e., engaged in combat] and, they were circling about each other and. But the young king thought that he had to do this and, he gave the great, boisterous, joyful heave to the giant, and he put him to the ground and, he cut the head off him, with his sword. Then he put the head in a sack on his back and he leaped onto the back of his filly, and he set out to return home.]*

Now to the run as it appears in another version of the same story, the recording of *Stòiridh Ladhair* from 14 May 1994. Although the piece is not as full here, Brian still retains many of the same elements which appear above, including the giant's speech to his men in which he threatens to make an object of mockery out of the king's head, as well as the king's use of the man with "the largest head and the slimmest leg" as a club with which to kill the others.

Dh'fholbh a' sin 'rìgh 's, char e gus a' chaisteal bha seo 's, thuirt e riuth' gu' robh e ag iarraidh ceann fear agus filidh.

Thuirt a' fear, 'fear bha staigh, "Ruithibh mach," thuirt e "gus an fhear tha sin agus, thoiribh dhomh-as an ceann aig' gus an dèan mi, an cluich mi balla-bùird leis."

<sup>70</sup>Linguistic Survey of Scotland recording T1006, May 1978.



'S dar a thàinig iad mach, rug e air feadhainn diubh 's -- rug e air a' fear bu, bu mhoth' ceann 's bu chaoil' cas, 's sgleoc e an t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil'. 'S thàinig e a-staigh 's, "O," thuirt am fomhair ris fhèin, "tha e colach gu' beil a', a' fear beag tha mach, nach [eil] e sgaiteach."  
Thàinig e fhèin mach. 'S bha e fhèin 's a' rìgh 'sabaid, ach thog a' rìgh togail 's leag e e 's thog e an ceann deth, ghearr e an ceann deth leis a' chladheamh aig'.<sup>71</sup>

*[Then the king left, and he went to this castle, and he said to them that he was seeking 'ceann fear agus filidh' (i.e., the giant's head).*

*The man, the man who was inside said, "Run out," he said, "to that man that's there and, bring me his head so that I can make, so that I may play with it as a butt of sarcasm."*

*And when they came out, he [i.e., the king] seized upon some of them -- he seized upon the man with the largest head and the slimmest leg, and he knocked the brains out of the other ones [with him].*

*And he came inside and, "Oh," said the giant to himself, "it seems that the, the little man who is outside, that he's angry."*

*He himself came out. And himself and the king were fighting, but the king gave a heave and he downed him and he took his head off him, he cut his head off him with his sword.]*

Moving on to the run as it appears in *Stòiridh Loircean*, the following excerpt comes from the 1974 recording:

Agus, eh, chum Loircean a' dol gus do ruig e an caisteal, a' chiad fear gus an tàinig e an caisteal, eh, copair. Thug e glaodh aig a' doras, fiacail an athar chur mach, na deagh chòmhrag air an son.

Thuirt a' fear bha staigh, [...] thuirt e, "Ruithi' mach, 'fhearaibh, 's thoiribh staigh ceann an fhear bheag tha sin [] dhomh-as, gu' am bi mi 'dèanamh balla-bhùird 's magaidh dheth."

Dh'èirich iad sin mach, 's thug Loircean sùil orr'-s', rug e air a' fear, 'fear bu mhoth' ceann dhiubh, 's bu chaoile cas. 'S rug e air 'chasan, 's sgleog e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn aig an doras.

"Ahhh," thuirt a' fomhair mòr, "tha e colach," thuirt e, "nach eil am fear beag tha mach, nach eil e leis fhèin. Gu' feum mi fhèin dhol mach."

Thàinig e sin mach 's, char e fhèin 's Loircean, an greimean a chèil'. Smuainich Loircean gur e siod 'chiad treunt' a's a' deach e a-riamh 's, thug e an togail mhòr, èibhinn, aighearach ud dhan fhomhair, 's chuir e air a dhruim e 's, sgud e an ceann deth.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>71</sup>14 May 1994, Tape 1 of 2.

<sup>72</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/27/A-B1.

*[And, eh, Loircean kept going until he reached the castle, the first one until he came to the, eh, copper castle. He gave a cry at the door, to send their father's teeth out, or [to provide] good combat for them.*

*The man who was inside said, [...] he said, "Run out, men, and bring in the head of that little man there [] to me, so that I can make a butt of derision and mockery of it."*

*They rose [and went] out, and Loircean looked at them, he seized upon the man, the man with the largest head of them, and the slimmest leg. And he seized upon his legs, and he knocked the brains out of the ones who were at the door.*

*"Ahhh," said the big giant, "it seems that," he said, "that the little man who is outside isn't, that he isn't by himself. That I myself will have to go out."*

*He came out then and, himself and Loircean, got a hold of one other. Loircean thought that that was the greatest [test of] strength which he had ever undergone and, he gave the great, boisterous, joyful heave to the giant, and he put him on his back and, he cut the head off him.]*

The 1995 version is again similar; while not as full as the earlier version, it contains many of the same elements as the preceding excerpts:

'S ruig e an caisteal, eh, copair. 'S thug e rap air a' doras, thuirt e riuth' fìaclan 'athar chur mach, dha-as.

Thuirt a' fear bha staigh, "Ruith mach 'fhearaibh," thuirt es', " 's thoiribh ceann an fhear tha sin dhomh-as, gu' bi mi 'cluich balla-bùird dheth."

Ach, chaidh iad mach, ach rug Loircean air a' chiad aon diubh thàinig mach. 'S rug e air 's [rug] e, eh, air, air a' chasan air 's, sgleog e 'n t-eanchainn a's an fheadhainn eil' leis.

"Tha-a-a," thuirt a' fear bha a-staigh, "tha e colach gu' bheil a' fear beag tha mach shin, gu' bheil e sgaiteach. Thig orm fhèin dhol mach."

Ach thàinig a' sin a' fomhair fhèin mach 's, bha e fhèin 's Loircean 's e fhèin a chèil' 's, smuainich Loircean, 's thug e an togail ud dha-as, 's thog e 'chladheamh 's, sgud e an ceann deth.<sup>73</sup>

*[And he reached the, eh, copper castle. And he gave a rap on the door, he said to them to send out his father's teeth, to him.*

*The man who was inside said, "Run out, men," he said, "and bring the head of that man to me, so that I may play with it as a butt of derision."*

*But, they went out, but Loircean seized upon the first one of them [who] came out. And he seized upon him and he [seized], eh, upon, upon his legs and, he knocked the brains out of the others with him.*

*"Haaa," said the man who was inside, "it seems that the little man who is outside there, that he's angry. I'll have to go out myself."*

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<sup>73</sup>31 March 1995, Tape 1 of 2.

*But then the giant himself came out and, himself and Loircean and himself were together [in combat] and, Loircean thought, and he gave the heave to him, and he lifted his sword and, he cut the head off him.]*

A consideration of the above examples makes it clear that although there are some variations from telling to telling, there is a very high degree of similarity between the recordings; although we are dealing with two different stories, the set piece is basically the same in each one. Whether or not it is a full-fledged "run" as used by other storytellers is another matter; the term "run" is itself problematic.<sup>74</sup> However, this use of set material -- including the giant's dialogue, which also occurs in both Ailidh Dall's and Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord's stories, as well as the slimmest leg/largest head device, part of the *teach na n-amhus* motif which Bruford dates to probably the sixteenth century (1969: 15) -- to form an extended set piece is the only such long set piece which occurs in more than one of Brian's stories, and the term "episodic run" should suffice for our discussion.

#### ***Implications: Conservatism or Creativity?***

Having seen that the same episodic run occurs in two stories, the question arises as to whether this represents "borrowing" on Brian's part from one story to another, or whether Brian in fact learned both stories with the set piece already a part of both of them. Thus depending on our interpretation, the appearance of the same run in both stories could represent either a conservative or a creative (or re-creative) element in Brian's storytelling. Based on the evidence of Brian's storytelling as a whole, as well as the fact that this is the *only* instance in which such a set piece occurs in more than one story *and* that the set piece occurs in all the recorded versions of each story, I am inclined to believe that he learned both the stories with the run already in them, and that they are therefore evidence of his conservatism as a storyteller, his faithfulness to the "correct" form of the stories as he heard them. The fact that the episodic run only occurs in two stories mirrors Brian's use of other stock material, as is detailed in my discussion of Brian's use of language below: while there are many shorter descriptive stock phrases and motifs in Brian's stories which could be used in more than one story, the majority of them appear again and again only in recordings of the *same* story, never spreading to the other stories. Again, such a use of traditional material strongly suggests that Brian is striving to tell stories "as he heard them," associating set material with particular stories, rather than freely borrowing this material from story to story. In this sense, much of the material which Brian has recorded serves as

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<sup>74</sup>The term "run" is discussed in more detail below in the section on "Language".

a kind of "fossil record," a window onto the storytelling of his past. In his stories, we find traditional elements as they were combined in his grandmother's storytelling, preserved as he originally heard them. Thus paradoxially, the occurrence of the same run in two different stories probably does not represent innovation on Brian's part, but instead represents his faithfulness to a heard original; at the same time, however, it does reflect the fact that such innovation probably occurred in the past.

### ***Possible Reasons for Lack of Long Runs***

As I have stated that the episodic run as detailed above is the only such long set piece present in Brian's stories, we might ask why such an important feature of Gaelic storytelling is absent in Brian's stories. One possibility is that although Brian, along with others of his generation, was exposed to a fairly active storytelling tradition in his youth, the tradition has been in decline all his life, and his exposure to it has decreased as time has passed. A storyteller thus removed from an active storytelling context might lose the ability to use and easily manipulate some of the longer and more complex set pieces or runs while keeping the shorter, more memorable phrases in his active repertoire. It is indeed the case that Brian's storytelling is full of short stock phrases but lacking in longer runs: anyone who has examined tales recorded from the renowned storytellers of this century and the last would agree that Brian's storytelling is noticeably lacking in the long runs which are so common in many of these manuscripts and recordings.<sup>75</sup> Interestingly, the great nineteenth century story collector John F. Campbell of Islay makes a comment which may be of relevance to this discussion. In his description of a nineteenth century storyteller's version of *Sgeulachd Cois' O' Cein*, Campbell says "They [i.e., sections of the story] are told with less peculiar language, as usually happens when the narrator has been long absent from his native place, or has ceased to be a regular storyteller."<sup>76</sup> As Campbell had a great knowledge of the dynamics of nineteenth-century Gaelic storytelling and had the opportunity to observe many storytellers, his comment is most informative. That he should have noticed that individuals not in the habit of telling stories regularly tended to use less "peculiar language" (presumably runs and other traditional idiom) is therefore significant, and perhaps his comments apply equally well to Brian.

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<sup>75</sup>Examples of long runs can be found in Campbell 1890-93. Similarly, see O' Nolan's 1987 article, "The Functioning of Long Formulae in Irish Heroic Folktales" for many examples.

<sup>76</sup>Quoted by the Rev. Dr. George Henderson in *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, Vol. XXV (1901-1903): 186-187.



Of course, when considering the reason for the lack of long runs in his repertoire, there is the possibility that Brian was simply not exposed to many long runs in the stories which he heard. However, as he has told me that his grandmother Siùsie's stories usually lasted about an hour,<sup>77</sup> she must have told the stories in such a way as to make them longer than Brian's versions (which typically last no more than 25 minutes); and on the basis of her background as well as the evidence provided by her son Ailidh Dall's stories (which have more long runs than Brian's), it seems reasonable to suppose that she would have used some long runs in her storytelling. Therefore, perhaps the answer to the question of the paucity of long runs in Brian's repertoire may be that his lack of exposure to frequent storytelling for most of his life has left him with a lesser command of traditional idiom and imagery than would have been ordinary for earlier storytellers.<sup>78</sup> That said, the fact that Brian's command of story structure is very good, and that his memory for shorter set idiom is also good, contradicts this supposition, and in the final analysis it is difficult to say with certainty why his storytelling should be so lacking in long runs.

### **Substitution of One Stock Phrase for Another**

The remaining instances of borrowing between stories in Brian's repertoire are not as numerous or significant as the instances of the sharing of motifs and characters and the shared episodic run discussed above. The first instance occurs in the 1974 recording of *Stòiridh Loircein* and involves the substitution of a stock phrase which usually occurs in *Stòiridh Ladhair* for a different stock phrase which usually occurs in *Stòiridh Loircein*. This substitution takes place in the episodic run which appears in both stories and which I have just discussed above.

To turn to the evidence, in the 1974 recording of *Stòiridh Loircein*, instead of using the phrase "*balla-bùird*" ("a butt of derision"), Brian uses the phrase "*cluich an ubhail*" ("the apple game"), which he usually only associates with *Stòiridh Ladhair*. The phrase "*cluich an ubhail*" comes from a part of *Stòiridh Ladhair* in which the heroes are forced to play a game which involves poisoned apples being thrown at them. This is called "*cluich an ubhail*," or "the apple game".<sup>79</sup> In the 1974 version of *Stòiridh Loircein*, however, Brian also uses this phrase -- in this instance, right in the middle of the episodic run which we already know also occurs in *Stòiridh Ladhair*.

<sup>77</sup>Field notes from unrecorded conversation of 1 July 1994.

<sup>78</sup>The question of Brian's use of traditional idiom is again discussed below in the section on Brian's use of language.

<sup>79</sup>For some discussion of such "apple games" in Gaelic stories, see McKay 1940: 252 and 275-276.



Here Loircean is outside a giant's castle and we expect the giant to tell his men to go out and bring him Loircean's head so that he can make an object of mockery and derision out of it. However, he instead asks his men to bring him Loircean's head so that he may play "*cluich an ubhail*" -- "the apple game" -- with it. Brian's words are as follows:

'S thuirt am fomhair riuth', dhol mach agus, ceann an fhear bheag a bh'aig a doras thoir' staigh gus am biodh e 'dèanamh, 'dèanamh cluich an ubhail leis.

[*And the giant said to them, to go out and, to bring in the head of the little man who was at the door until he would be doing, doing the apple game with it.*]

It is more usual in this story for the giant to wish to use Loircean's head as a butt of derision and mockery ("*balla bùird 's magaidh*"). In fact, Brian has already used the "*balla-bùird*" phrase earlier in the story: Loircean has already been to the copper castle, where the giant asked for his head as follows:

"Ruithi' mach, 'fhearaibh, 's thoiribh staigh ceann an fhear bheag tha sin [] dhomh-as, gu' am bi mi 'dèanamh balla-bhùird 's magaidh dheth."

[*"Run out, men, and bring in the head of that little man there [] to me, so that I can make a butt of derision and mockery of it."*]

Thus Brian uses the expected phrase "'dèanamh balla-bhùird ... dheth" ("to make a butt of derision ... of it") early in the story, and then the unexpected "*dèanamh cluich an ubhail leis*" ("to play the apple game with it") later on in the story. As the substitution of the unexpected phrase from *Stòiridh Ladhair* for the more usual one in *Stòiridh Loircean* occurs during the telling of a set piece which appears in both stories, it seems highly likely that the substitution is an unconscious one, representing either a slip of the tongue or an instance of unconscious borrowing, rather than representing purposeful manipulation of material. As such it could serve as a good example of the way in which formulaic material is "naturally" borrowed from one story to another. There is also the possibility that Brian *is* consciously varying his material here to make it more interesting, and that he is drawing on his knowledge of stock material in order to do this. Alan Bruford notes that "It is obvious in some cases that one run has borrowed phrases from another" (1969:198), and it seems that this example is just such an occurrence -- one which, however, is not repeated in the subsequent recordings of the story. Thus whether the substitution is intentional or

unconscious, we see that Brian is capable of using stock material in an unexpected context; however, we should note that this is a rare instance of such a phenomenon.

### Substitution of Stock Characters

There are also a few instances in which it appears that Brian substitutes one character's name for another during a momentary lapse of memory. This occurs in Episode 5 of the 1995 recording of *Stòiridh Loircein*, when Brian relates that *Cailleach nan Cearc* ("the hen-wife") visits the queen in order to discover the identity of Loircean's father. Here we would expect the woman from the golden castle to visit the queen rather than the hen-wife. In this telling of the story it is clear that Brian hesitates before saying the name *Cailleach nan Cearc*, and my impression is that he has momentarily lost the thread of the story and here substitutes the name of a stock character, the well known *Cailleach nan Cearc*. Another substitution takes place in the 1994 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* when Brian uses the *Cailleach nan Cearc* character in a similar way. Here he uses both the name *Cailleach nan Cearc* and the name *Seanagaidh Seanmhair* to refer to the same character as follows:

'S thuirt, thuirt a' rìgh ri Seanagaidh Seanmhair, Cailleach nan Cearc, "O," thuirt a' rìgh, "a' fear tha sin," thuirt [a' rìgh], " 'balach tha sin, tha 'marbhadh na bheil agam-sa dhe searbh'-- dhe luchd-sheirbhis."<sup>80</sup>

[And the king said, said to Seanagaidh Seanmhair, the Hen-Wife, "Oh," the king said, "that man," said [the king], "that boy, he's killing that which I have of serv-- of servants."]

The name "*Seanagaidh Seanmhair*"<sup>81</sup> is something of a nonsense name, and Brian has explained the character as "a very old woman.... And she's supposed to [have] knowledge of every kind of thing....knowledge of all things.... And you'd go to her for advice."<sup>82</sup> Thus *Seanagaidh Seanmhair* is a stock character, much like *Cailleach nan Cearc*, and in the above example he appears to be using the two stock character names interchangeably.

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<sup>80</sup>2 July 1994, Tape 1 of 2.

<sup>81</sup>Brian's pronunciation of the second element of the name varies from *Seanamhair* to *Seanagal* to *Seanagabh*. The first element, "*Seanagaidh*" is perhaps related to the word "*Seanachaidh*," which refers to a reciter of tales or a person otherwise skilled in ancient knowledge. Dr. John MacInnes has told me that he has heard of the character in stories, but has not come across the name in print.

<sup>82</sup>19 July 1997, Tape 1 of 1.

The only other instance of travelling characters (as it were) in Brian's stories is that of the already discussed *Bodach Baigear* ("the old beggar") who appears at the beginning of the 1958 version of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*.<sup>83</sup> While I have already considered the issues surrounding the appearance of this character in this recording, it is worth noting that here again we get some evidence that characters and motifs were exchanged between stories in the Stewart family's storytelling. Thus, while many of the examples discussed above may appear to be anomalous or due to a lapse of memory on Brian's part, taken together they lead to the conclusion that Brian is more familiar with the free manipulation of stock material and runs than might initially be suspected. This, in turn, adds another dimension to our understanding of Brian as a storyteller, for it strengthens the impression that time and lack of participation in storytelling have had a definite effect on the way in which he tells stories. Therefore while he may in fact have been exposed to storytelling in which there was much more manipulation of material between stories, he himself rarely uses this storytelling technique.

#### **SELF-CORRECTION AND CLARIFICATION OF DETAILS**

Having considered many features of Brian's storytelling as they emerge from a comparison of story versions, I would now like to consider what we may learn from the examination of instances in which Brian corrects himself or otherwise clarifies a story. Some self-correction and clarification has already been examined as part of the above discussion,<sup>84</sup> but there are other equally interesting and informative instances of such phenomena to which I shall now turn.

##### **Self-Correction**

Self-correction -- an instance in which the storyteller realises he has made a mistake and goes out of his way to correct it -- is an important phenomenon, for it gives us an idea of how the storyteller feels about storytelling and what he holds to be the "correct" form of a story. It also immediately implies that the storyteller does indeed believe that there is a "correct" way to tell a story, which is in itself significant. I have already quoted Alan Bruford's comment that "Any good storyteller who realises that he has forgotten to account for what is happening in his story will go back and make good the omission" (1983: 108) and we have already seen a number of instances in which Brian displays such behaviour. As discussed above, he makes a crucial

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<sup>83</sup>See section on "Differences between Versions of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*" above.

<sup>84</sup>See section on "Confusion of Parallel Episodes and Omission of Logical Links".

mistake in his 1974 telling of *Am Bodach Baigeir* and when he realises this he stops the narrative and begins the story again.<sup>85</sup>

### ***Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn': Making a "Mistake"***

Another good example of self-correction occurs in Episode 2 of the 1979 version of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'*. In this story, Oisean's greyhound bitch is expecting pups and he has just told his wife that she should not give away the first puppy to anyone who may call during the day. The wife answers that she will not give the puppy away, after which Brian *should* move on to tell how a stranger does indeed call and does indeed ask for the first puppy. Instead, he starts to tell what happens when Oisean returns home later that day. However, he realises his mistake, breaks out of the story to say that he has taken a wrong step, and resumes the story with the correct sequence of events. Brian's words are as follows:

[*Oisean speaking to his wife:*]

"Agus, dh'fhaodadh," thuirt e, "gu' tig fear ann a' seo bhios 'g iarraidh na cuileanan -- aon de na cuileanan. Ach na toir dha a' chiad cuilean."

"O cha toir," thuirt a' bhean. "Cha toir mi dha a' chiad cuilean."

Char Oisean nis mach dhan a' bheinn a shealg, 's dar thàinig e staigh, dh'fhoighnich e rith' robh na cuileanan aig a' ghall'.

"O bha," ars i.

"O ma tha," thuirt e, "thoir suas 'chiad cuilean am faic mi e."

Agus -- *O chan e, chaidh mi mearachd.*

Dar a bha Oisean air folbh co-dhiubh, bha na cuileanan aig a' ghall'. 'S thàinig fear gus an dorus, agus eh, dh'iarr e a' cuilean.

[*"And, it could be," he said, "that a man will come here who will be wanting the puppies -- one of the puppies. But do not give him the first puppy."*

*"Oh I won't," said his wife. I won't give him the first puppy."*

*Oisean went out now to the mountain to hunt, and when he came in, he asked her whether the bitch had had the puppies."*

*"Oh yes," she said.*

*"O well then," he said, "hand up the first puppy so that I can see him."*

*And -- Oh no, I've made a mistake.*

*When Oisean was away anyway, the bitch had the puppies. And a man came to the door, and eh, asked for the puppy.]*

It is quite evident here that Brian has a clear idea of the story's structure and that he believes that he can make a mistake and correct it. This is in keeping with what we might expect, considering the other evidence that story structure is relatively fixed in

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<sup>85</sup>See the above discussion for full details.



his mind and that he believes that stories should be told "the same way" each time. Of course, there are instances in which Brian does *not* tell a story the same way each time, but the difference here is that, unlike an optional repetition or lack of expansion of a detail, the omission of this detail in this story will affect the logic and outcome of the story, and thus its omission really would mean that the story was not told in the "same" way. Such an omission would not be an optional change or variation of the story, but instead a violation of the story's logical integrity -- hence Brian's use of the word "*mearachd*," "a mistake."

### ***Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn: "Losing the Story"***

One other example of self-correction occurs in the April 1993 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*. Here at the beginning of Episode 6, *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*'s mother has just brought him back to life after his fight in mid-air with his brother, and Brian starts to say that *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* now returns to the *Fèinn*: "*S thàinig e sin air ais gus, gu Fionn a-rithistich*" ("And he came back to, to Fionn again").

However, here Brian decides that he is on the wrong track, and corrects himself by stopping and saying "*Chan e, chaill mi mo stòiridh an sin*" ("No, I lost my story there"). He then goes on to tell the resolution of an incident in the story involving the character Caoilte, which was first introduced in Episode 2. As I have noted in the discussion of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* above, it is hard to say how the Caoilte incident fits into Brian's conception of the story as a whole. However, it is clear that since he reintroduces Caoilte at this point in the story in both the April 1993 and the 1994 versions, there is *something* going on in his mind which is reminding him to insert this detail at this point. Although the logic may be obscure to us as listeners, we may suppose that there is some logical pattern which Brian is trying to follow, and this supposition is strengthened by the fact that Brian perceives his mis-step here as a mistake, just as his "mistake" in the 1979 *Oisean as Dèidh na Fèinn* violated the logic of the story and necessitated a correction. Therefore, while this example further illustrates the point that Brian will correct himself if he realises he has told a story in such a way as to make it difficult or impossible to proceed in the "right" way without doing so, it may also help to clarify our discussion of the Caoilte incident in this particular story; for by understanding that Brian seems to correct himself when he has violated the logic of a story, we may suppose that whatever the significance of the Caoilte incident, it does have some bearing on the logic of the story as Brian understands it.



### Clarification of Details

On a few occasions Brian has clarified some points or details of a story in order to more clearly explain the relationship between characters in the story or the reasons for which events take place. We have already seen this in his clear explanation of how and why *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* and *Am Bodach Baigeir* are connected.<sup>86</sup> As with the correction of mistakes, such instances give us a fuller picture of how Brian conceives the story in his own mind, and strengthens the sense that for him, the story has a definite shape. In trying to describe Brian's relationship to the stories, I have come to the conclusion that he remembers the stories much as a person would remember real events: he may forget or confuse details from telling to telling, but in the back of his mind he holds the "underlying truth" or reality of the story -- he understands the relationships between the characters, and knows facts about them which he may not relate in every telling, just as someone recounting a true story may not tell every detail or clarify each relationship each time he tells the story anew.

### *Examples in Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*

Brian's clarification of details confirms the impression that he has background knowledge of the characters which does not always emerge in each telling. Let us consider two examples of discussions which followed on his telling of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, one in 1973 and one in 1994. The 1973 recording was made by David Clement, and following the story there is a brief exchange in which Brian tries to clarify what is happening in the story when *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* rises in the form of a cloud from aboard Fionn's ship and battles another cloud in mid-air. Brian finishes the story and David Clement says "O, glè mhath" ("Oh, very good") after which Brian spontaneously volunteers the following information:

**B.S.:** Ach 'se 'bhràthair, beil thu a' tuigsinn, eh, bha -- char mi bìdeag bheag cam deth ann a' sin, 'se bràthair dha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, am meall dorch' eile, a thàinig. Agus 'se mac rìgh na Fraing a bh'ann cuideachd. Agus 'se a bhràthair thoir', eh, thoir' beò a-rithisti' e.... 'S bha -- Shin a'd a-nisd, Stòiridh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

*[B.S.: But it was his brother, do you understand, eh, it was -- I went a little bit wrong from it there, it was Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn's brother, the other dark cloud, which came. And he was the son of the king of France also. And it's his brother [who he was] bringing, eh, bringing to life again.... And it was -- there you have now, the story of Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.]*

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<sup>86</sup>See the section on "Further Implications of Logical Links" above.

Here Brian shows that he has knowledge of the characters and how they are related to one another, knowledge which might not otherwise be explicitly stated in the course of telling the story.<sup>87</sup> Note also that Brian says that he went a "bit wrong" in his story; this must refer to the fact that in this recording he did not mention that the doctor who comes to heal *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* at the end of the story is actually his brother, a point which he usually makes clear when telling the story -- hence his motive for putting this right as soon as he has finished telling the story proper.<sup>88</sup>

After telling his 1994 version of this same story, Brian again clarified some points in the story, some of which again concerned the relationship between *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* and his brother. Here the comments are elicited when I begin to ask him questions about the fight in mid-air between the two clouds:

[*Following on from conversation:*]

**C.Z.:** Uh huh. Aye, aye. Agus nuair a bha e 'na mheall dorch, a' sabaid --

**B.S.:** Uh huh --

**C.Z.:** Dè tha "mheall"? "Cloud" no, dè seòrsa rud a bh'ann?

[**C.Z.:** *Uh huh. Aye, aye. And when he was a dark cloud, fighting --*

**B.S.:** *Uh huh --*

**C.Z.:** *What is a "mheall"? "Cloud" or, what sort of thing was it?*]

Here Brian takes the opportunity not only to answer my question but also to elaborate on the scenario in the story:

**B.S.:** Well, in English, it rose like a cloud from the ship --

**C.Z.:** Uh huh --

**B.S.:** -- from the --

**C.Z.:** Aye, from the ship.

**B.S.:** And, there's two clouds was fighting for three days and --

**C.Z.:** -- aye, three days --

**B.S.:** -- there were two, there were two brothers, and he said to him, "*Ha, ha, cha bu chath gu seo*,"<sup>89</sup> he knew what his brother could do, too, and he knew what he could do, and he was afraid that, that he would lose the battle.

**C.Z.:** Aye.

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<sup>87</sup> Cf. Pronsias Mac Cana's 1996 article "A Literary Footnote: The nun of Beare" for a similar point about the importance of background knowledge and traditional context.

<sup>88</sup> Actually, it is usually *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* who comes to heal his brother. However, in this one version Brian reverses this detail -- perhaps an unconscious slip-up which also contributes to his desire to clarify the relationship between the characters.

<sup>89</sup> "Ha, ha, it wasn't a battle until now."

**B.S.:** But he didn't lose it, it's uh, the king, that kept the, the bow of the ship to him instead of keeping the tail end of the ship from [him] when he was coming back, he fell down and, he broke himself on the ....

**C.Z.:** Aye. Why did he do that? Why did the king do that, because *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* told him to keep it the other way -- did he do it on purpose?

**B.S.:** Aye, well he did it, he got his head inside it, you know, and eh ... he, he didn't mean to do it.

**C.Z.:** No, he didn't.

**B.S.:** He meant, he meant to keep the tail end of the ship but, with the excitement and the fighting, he kept the, the ... he didn't really mean to do it, and that's what his mother told him --

**C.Z.:** Aye.

**B.S.:** " 'S math char dhut, nach e le do dheòin a rinn thu e.'<sup>90</sup> If he had a do it willingly, she would have did away with him.

Here we have an excellent opportunity to gain some insight into the way in which Brian understands the characters and their motivations. First he tells us that *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* "knew what his brother could do" and was "afraid ... that he would lose the battle," a wonderful indication that Brian empathises with his characters and conceives of them as thinking, feeling individuals. We also get a sense of Brian's engagement with the story when he next says "But he didn't lose it," and continues to describe how it was Fionn's (sometimes referred to by Brian as "the king") failure to keep the tail end of the ship pointed towards *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* which accidentally killed him. Better still is Brian's explanation of why Fionn killed *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*: we are told that "he didn't mean to do it," and that it was the heat of the moment -- "the excitement and the fighting" -- which caused Fionn to forget to keep the tail end of the boat towards *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* as he descended from the air. Perhaps more than anywhere else we get a sense here that Brian is fully engaged with the characters and that his knowledge of the story is that of someone who is relating an event which he has himself somehow witnessed or experienced first-hand. Again, this reinforces my impression that Brian's relation to the story is as someone who is remembering and recounting a real event. Thus while Brian may make mistakes (some of which he recognises, others of which may go unnoticed by him) while telling stories and may confuse details, I believe that the evidence of his storytelling and comments shows that he conceives the stories as being unchanging and comprising a core of information which must not be altered, whether or not all of the information is conveyed to the listener each time a story is told.

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<sup>90</sup>"It's well for you, that you did not do it willingly."

### *An Instance of Collaborative Memory*

I would like to examine one more instance of clarification and correction, this time a joint interview recorded in November 1973 with both Brian and his cousin Mary Stewart (Ailidh Dall's daughter) present. In this interview, Mary -- whose nickname was "Micki" -- tries to tell *Stòiridh Ladhair*, but it is clear from the recording that Micki has difficulty remembering the story, and from time to time she asks Brian for help. At other points, Brian actually interrupts and offers advice or information which Micki has left out. This provides a unique opportunity to observe Brian interacting with another family member while trying to remember the contours of a story. It is worth pointing out that Brian and Micki are of the same generation -- both are grandchildren of the storyteller Siùsie Stewart -- and as such they were probably exposed to the same storytelling context (and content) and probably had roughly the same amount of practice in telling stories. This, in turn, may contribute to a similar storytelling ethos on both their parts -- an ethos which I believe is largely conservative and retentive, and which places value on the recounting of stories as they were originally heard.

To turn to the recording, Mary begins by taking some time to remember the story, saying "*Fuirich gu' cuimhnich mi air rudeigin dh'inns' mi dha ma tha*" ("Wait until I remember something that I'll tell him, so"). She then proceeds to tell the story, but does not include the first episode, and confuses details in Episodes 2 and 3. She begins as follows:

**M.S.:** *Stòiridh Ladhair. 'Se rìgh bha seo, bheil thu 'faiceil? Agus, em, theirig e. 'S bha mac, aon mhac aig'. 'S es', bha e 'na rìgh òg, a mhac. Agus, bha e an còmhnaidh, bha e 'na cluich ann a' seo, bha e 'cluich rud ris an canadh aid na dìstean, ma tha fhios agad fhèin de rud tha sin.*

*[The Story of Ladhar. There was a king, do you see? And, em, he died. And he had a son, one son. And he, he was the young king, his son. And, he was always he was playing here, he was playing at a thing they called the dice, if you know yourself what that is.]*

Here Mary begins by confusing the early events of the story and, most importantly, failing to introduce the main character of the story, Ladhar. She also has the young king playing dice instead of cards, but she soon realises her mistake and corrects this detail in the next episode:



'S aon latha, bha e air tolman, àit' uain' ann a' seo, 's tha e 'cluich na distean, dar thàinig a' boirionnach tha seo far a' robh e. Agus, thuirt i ris dè bha e 'dèanamh. O chan e, 'sann aice-eas a bha na rudan ann.

*[And one day he was on a mound, a green place here, and he's playing dice, when this woman came [over to] where he was. And, she asked him what he was doing. Oh no, it was she who had the things.]*

Here Mary corrects her mistake, stating that it was the woman who "had the things" (i.e., the dice), and continues with the story for a short while until she again confuses some key details, the set dialogue which is exchanged between the woman and the king when the king wins at cards. Here the woman asks the king to name his prize, to which the king should reply that he wants his choice of either horse or wife from the woman. However, Mary instead supplies a different piece of set dialogue, the beginning of the formula for putting *geasan* ("binding obligations") on a character, and immediately asks Brian for help when she cannot remember the rest of the formula. The exchange is as follows:

Agus, thuirt i ris dè bha e 'dèan' -- "O," thuirt e, " 'sann tha mi 'dèanamh cumh' 's bròn airson m'athar."

Agus, "O, ma tha," thuirt is', "an cuireadh thu gèam air na cairtean?"-- Sin 'rud a bh'ann.

"O tha mi com'," thuirt es'.

'S chuir e gèam airson na cairtean, agus choisinn a' rìgh òg.

Agus, "Ma tha," thuirt is', "tog brìgh do chluich," thuirt is' ris, "ma choisinn thu."

'S thuirt es' rith' rithistich, "Tha mi 'cur mo chrosan 's mo gheasan ort."

Ooo, dè seo 'rud a bh'ann?

*[Pause. Then BS is heard in the background:]*

**BS:** Trì buaraichean matha sìth --

**M.S.:** 'Se --

**B.S.:** -- stadadh oidhch' gach taigh gus a' faigh thu dhomh, eh, ceann --

**MS:** Och sin -- 's is' thuirt ri'.

**BS:** 'Se.

*[ And, she asked him what he was doing -- "Oh," he said, "I'm lamenting my father."*

*And, "Oh, then," she said, "would you play a game of cards?" -- That's what it was.*

*"Oh I don't mind," he said.*

*And he played a game of cards, and the young king won.*

*And, "Well then," she said, "name your prize," she said to him, "since you won."*

*And he said to her again, "I am putting my crosses and my spells on you."*



*Ohhh, what was the thing?*

*[Pause. Then BS is heard in the background:]*

**B.S.:** *The three fetters of the fairy women --*

**M.S.:** *Yes --*

**B.S.:** *-- stop a night in each house until you bring me, eh, the head --*

**M.S.:** *Och that -- and she said to him.*

**B.S.:** *Yes.]*

The above scenario is most interesting, for while Mary Stewart is able to remember bits of set dialogue (the be-spelling formula which Brian uses in this story, and which is widely used in Gaelic storytelling<sup>91</sup>), she cannot remember the actual structure of the story. This, in turn, suggests that set pieces of information may exist in a storyteller's memory separately from a conceptualised structure of the story -- supporting Donald Archie MacDonald's 1981 conjecture that storytellers make use of "structural or conceptual memory" to memorise plots, as well as "verbal memory" to remember set dialogue (117). Even more interesting is the fact that she remembers the *wrong* bit of set dialogue here, the formula for putting *geasan* ("binding obligations") on a character -- again suggesting that her verbal memory of the dialogue is separate from her memory of the story's structure. When she cannot remember the end of the formula, she asks Brian for help, to which request he responds by supplying the rest of the formula. This in turn prompts Mary to remember and state that it is the woman who speaks this line, not the king, a statement with which Brian agrees. Next the two cousins start to discuss the structure of the story. Mary remembers that the king wins three times, and Brian reminds her that the king asks for his choice of horse. This then prompts Mary to remember some more set dialogue:

**M.S.:** *Dar a chuir es', choisinn es' trì trioban.*

**B.S.:** *Uh ... thuirt is' gu' robh a' roghai' each aice.*

**M.S.:** *O, 'se. "Tha mo rogha bean agam ort." Sin a'ad a' rud a thuirt e rith'.*

*"O uill," thuirt is', "bios tu duilich ri do thoileachdainn na bheir mis' bean dhut."*

**DC:** *Mmm hmm.*

**M.S.:** *'S thug i an àird gu àit' a bha seo e. 'S bha e làn dhe bhoirionnaich 's searbhantan, dhen a h-uile seòrs'.*

*[M.S.: When he put, he won three times.*

*B.S.: Uh ... she said that the choice of horse was hers.*

*M.S.: Oh, yes. "You must give me my choice of wife." That's the thing he said to her.*

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<sup>91</sup>See "Examples - Type 1 Set Language" below for a discussion of this formula.

*"Oh well," she said, "you are difficult to satisfy if I must give you a wife."*

**D.C.:** *Mmm hmm.*

**M.S.:** *And she took him up to this place. And it was full of women and servants, of every kind.]*

Here we have evidence that both Brian and Mary have a fixed pattern of the story in mind and that they are attempting to tell it in the "right" way. Mary's repeated self-corrections imply that she knows that she is telling the story incorrectly, and Brian's certainty in answering her questions also indicates that he has a clear idea of how the story should be told. It is also interesting to note the way in which Brian's provision of set language acts as a trigger to Mary's memory: certain phrases cause the storyteller to remember the next incident in the story, or indeed the piece of dialogue which is spoken in response, which again gives some indication of the interaction between verbal and conceptual memory. We find more evidence of this in the next episode, when Mary begins to lose the thread of her story:

**M.S.:** Rinn aid, chluich iad na dìstnean ann a' sin. Ach choisinn is'.

Agus, "Ma tha," thuirt es', "tog brìgh do chluich."

"Togaidh," thuirt es' -- thuirt is' ris. Shin nis, dar a thuirt is' -- an e, dè a' rud a bh'ann?

**B.S.:** Mo chrosan 's mo gheasan.

**M.S.:** Mo chrosan 's mo geasan 's, o, trì buaraichean math' sìth, nach stadadh oidhch' a's gach taigh e, gus an tigeadh e, 's a bheireadh e dhith-eas, em, ceann fear agus filidh. Ach, cà' mi [...] mo stòiridh. Chan eil mi 'ga ghràdh ceart, Bhrian. Ach innsidh mi sin, o'n a d'rinn mi a' bhìdeag dheth.

Thàinig e an àird, [a bhalaich]. Agus, "O," thuirt a' bhean ris, dar thàinig e, "dh'innis mi dhut," thuirt i, mura cumadh thu bhuaip' gu' faigheadh thu ann an dragh.

'S dh'fholbh e nis, 's thug e leis a' làir a thug e bhuaip' fhèin. Ach cà' deach e? An e sin an uair bha Ladhar ann?

**B.S.:** Eh, bha Ladhar cuide ris a' chiad triob. An triob mu dheireadh char e leis fhèin.

**M.S.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** Ladhar Laochain, chan fhaodadh e bhith ann.

**M.S.:** O, 'seadh.

**B.S.:** Shin nuair char e a dh'iarraidh --

**M.S.:** 'Se.

**B.S.:** Fios feagal --

**M.S.:** 'Se.

**B.S.:** Fios feagal an aon sgeul.

**M.S.:** O, 'se. 'Se, 'se, 'se. [Pause.] Och, tha mi 'call mo stòiridh uileag. Dh'innis mi-- shìn mi thoir dhut, ach char mi car *mixed*.

[*Story disintegrates.*]

**[M.S.:** *They did, they played the dice there. But she won.*

*And, "Well then," he said, "name your prize."*

*"I will," he said -- she said to him. Now that's, when she said -- is it, what thing was it?*

**B.S.:** *My crosses and my spells.*

**M.S.:** *My crosses and my spells and, oh, the three fetters of the fairy women, that he wouldn't stop [more than] a night in each house, [until] he would bring her, um, the head of 'fear agus filidh'.<sup>92</sup> But, [where am I in] my story. I'm not telling it correctly, Brian. But I'll tell that [part], since I've done a bit of it.*

*He came up, [lad]. And, "Oh," said the wife to him, when he came, "I told you," she said, "if you wouldn't keep [away] from her that you would get into difficulty.*

*And he left now, and he took the mare that he got from herself. But where did he go? Was that when Ladhar was present?*

**B.S.:** *Eh, Ladhar was with him the first time. The last time he went by himself.*

**M.S.:** *Uh huh.*

**B.S.:** *Ladhar the little hero, he couldn't be there.*

**M.S.:** *Oh, yes.*

**B.S.:** *That's when he went to get --*

**M.S.:** *Yes.*

**B.S.:** *True knowledge --*

**M.S.:** *Yes.*

**B.S.:** *'True knowledge of the one tale'.*

**M.S.:** *Oh, yes. Yes, yes, yes. [Pause.] Och, I'm losing my entire story. I told, I started to give it to you, but I went a bit mixed.*

*[Story disintegrates.]*

Here again we get the sense that Mary believes that she is not telling the story "right". She says repeatedly that she is not telling the story correctly and that she has "lost" the story. In addition, after the young king is put under *geasan*, Mary knows that he must go somewhere, but she cannot remember where he goes. This is strikingly similar to the 1974 recording in which Brian, too, knew that the king must go on a quest but could not remember the content of the quest episode.<sup>93</sup> Here Mary breaks out of her narrative to ask Brian where the king goes and whether this is the episode in which Ladhar accompanies him: "*Ach cà deach e? An e sin an uair bha Ladhar ann?*" ("But where did he go? Was that the time that Ladhar was present?"). Brian responds that this is indeed the episode in which the young king is accompanied by

<sup>92</sup>Here Mary Stewart, like Brian, uses the phrase *ceann fear agus filidh*, literally "the head of a man and a poet"; cf. footnote 13 above.

<sup>93</sup>See "Similar Episodes Forgotten or Omitted" above.

Ladhar, and then adds that it is the second quest on which the young king must embark alone:

"Eh, bha Ladhar cuide ris a' chiad triob. An triob mu dheireadh char e leis fhèin."

[*" Eh, Ladhar was with him the first time. The last time he went by himself.*]

Again, this is most interesting, as we see the two cousins discussing the structure of the story, and thus indicating that they do think about the story in such terms. Later we have another interesting comment from Mary, when she states that she should have mentioned the character Ladhar beforehand, and that this omission is what has put her wrong in her telling of the story. She then continues to discuss the way in which she told the story incorrectly, and in so doing she and Brian discuss the correct structure of the story, and some of the details and incidents which Mary has thus far omitted:

**M.S.:** 'Se. Ach bu chòir dhomh inns' mu dheidhinn Ladhar, shin a'd 'rud a chuir mearachd mi. 'Se sin ...

**B.S.:** Uill ...

**M.S.:** 'Se sin nis ...

**B.S.:** 'Se Ladhar a fhuair e an toiseach.

**M.S.:** 'Se.

**B.S.:** [*Inaudible comment.*]

**M.S.:** Dh'innis mi a' stòiridh uile cam dhut, a bhròinein.

**B.S.:** Uill, 'se --

**M.S.:** 'Se Ladhar a fhuair e, a' chiad triob, dar a bha e, um, 'cluich na gèamachan bha seo, dar a bha e 'dèanamh cumh' 's bròn airson 'athar. [*Continues with discussion.*]

[**M.S.:** *Yes. But I ought to have told about Ladhar, there you have the thing which put me wrong. That's ...*

**B.S.:** *Well ...*

**M.S.:** *Now that's ...*

**B.S.:** *It's Ladhar who got it at first.*

**M.S.:** *Yes.*

**B.S.:** [*Inaudible comment.*]

**M.S.:** *I told you the story all wrong, my dear.*

**B.S.:** *Well, it's --*

**M.S.:** *It's Ladhar who got it, the first time, when he was, um, playing these games, when he was lamenting his father.* [*Continues with discussion.*]

At this point, Mary despairs of having told the story incorrectly and having gone wrong on several points. Here Brian agrees with her, and goes on to remind her of yet another motif which she has forgotten to include, that of Ladhar and his *cruit-chiùil*, a stringed musical instrument. This in turn reminds Mary of the two quest incidents of the story, one for "*fios feagal an aon sgeul*" and one for "*ceann fear agus filidh*", and further prompts her to state that it is during the second quest incident that the king is alone:

**M.S.:** Ach, tha mòran rudan [tha] mi 'dol cama [...]. Nach eil?

**B.S.:** Tha. Dar a bha a' chruit-chiùil aig'.

**M.S.:** 'Seadh.

**B.S.:** Aig Ladhar.

**M.S.:** O shin dar a char aid a dh'iarraidh fios fheagal an aon sgeul.

**B.S.:** Mmm hmm.

**M.S.:** Dar a fhuair e sin, nach e.

**B.S.:** Dar fhuair e sin, fhuair e --

**M.S.:** 'Se. Ah, 'sann, dar a char e dh'iarraidh ceann fear agus filidh bha e leis fhèin.

**B.S.:** Bha e leis fhèin.

**M.S.:** Bha. Bha. Dar a fhuair e is', 's dar chuir e an t-eanchainn aisd'-eas le ceann fear agus filidh dar a thàinig e air ais.

**B.S.:** 'Se.

[**M.S.:** *But, there are many things I'm going [e.g., telling] wrong [...]. Aren't there?*

**B.S.:** *Yes. When he had his musical instrument.*

**M.S.:** *Yes.*

**B.S.:** *When Ladhar had it.*

**M.S.:** *Oh that's when they went to get "true knowledge of the one tale".*

**B.S.:** *Mmm hmm.*

**M.S.:** *When he got that, wasn't it.*

**B.S.:** *When he got that, he got --*

**M.S.:** *Yes. Ah, it was, when he went to seek the head of a man and a poet he was by himself.*

**B.S.:** *He was by himself.*

**M.S.:** *Yes. Yes. When he got her, and when he knocked the brains out of her with the head of 'fear agus filidh' when he came back.*

**B.S.:** *Yes.]*

Here Mary's last comment echoes Brian's earlier statement that the king was not accompanied by Ladhar on his second quest -- "*Eh, bha Ladhar cuide ris a' chiad triob. An triob mu dheireadh char e leis fhèin*" ("Eh, Ladhar was with him the first time. The last time he went by himself") -- and so suggests that both these storytellers



may conceptualise and remember the stories in such structural terms. Finally, Mary states again that she has told the story incorrectly and finishes with the statement that "I started on and I went all wrong on it" -- a comment which indicates that once a storyteller starts down the wrong path in telling a story, it is difficult to turn back.<sup>94</sup>

From this last section of the recording it is clear to see that Mary is rehearsing all the different elements of the story, and she shows us with her comments that she has a clear idea of the way in which they are supposed to fit together. This again is strikingly similar to Brian's behaviour in 1974, when, in conversation with Donald Archie MacDonald, he rehearses the elements of *Stòiridh Ladhair* in an attempt to remember the contents of Episode 5, the quest for "*ceann fear agus filidh*". This conscious rehearsal by both cousins in similar contexts (i.e., trying to remember the contents of a forgotten episode or story) strengthens the supposition that rehearsal and repetition are key to the memory and learning processes. Through all of the discussion, Brian's comments and actions indicate that like Mary, he understands the story to fit a set pattern and that it is indeed possible to tell the story incorrectly. Furthermore, when he reminds his cousin of details such as the fact that the king is accompanied by Ladhar on his first quest but must go alone on his last quest, we see the storyteller conceptualising and remembering the story in structural terms.

While it is true that it is Mary Stewart who is trying to tell the story in the above transcript, this recording gives us just as much information about the way in which Brian remembers stories and thinks about story structure as it does about Mary. As with the other instances of clarification and self-correction, this recording provides clear evidence that Brian perceives the story to be fixed, and that he may well conceptualise and remember structure and content separately, or in different ways. In addition, the way in which he uses the fixed pieces of language as prompts for his cousin suggests that these triggers are important to him in his own storytelling. It is also interesting to observe the collaborative effort between these two cousins and to note that they are clearly trying to reconstruct a known original: it is clear that in this instance, there is no question of innovation in terms of the story's basic structure.

To close this discussion of clarification and correction and its implications for the dynamics of Brian's storytelling, it may be interesting to consider an opening run

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<sup>94</sup>This is again reminiscent of Jean-Louis le Rolland's comments that a storyteller must be "careful not to take the wrong road, without going too fast for fear of running past some turnings"; see above section on "Confusion of Parallel Episodes and Omission of Logical Links".

collected from an Irish storyteller, Tomás Ó Corragáin. This run, not uncommon in Ireland, ends with the following words:

Cé go bhfuil me 'g dul ag ársaighe an sgéil seo dhuid-se anocht, cha mhóide go bhfuil 'fhios agam. Má's dona tá 'fhios agam-sa anocht, go rabh sé níos measa agad-sa 'san oidhche i mbáireach, go mbéidh tú ag teacht d'á fhoghlaím chugam-sa 'san oidhche anóirthear.

*[Though I'm going to tell you this story tonight, it doesn't mean that I know it. If I don't know it well tonight, I hope you know it less well tomorrow night, so that you will come to me to learn it the night after.]*<sup>95</sup>

Crystallised in the traditional formula we have an indication of the importance of repetition and collaboration between storytellers in the learning and transmission of stories. As is clear from the 1973 recording of Brian and Micki, such repetition and collaboration continued to be important for the storytelling Stewarts in this century.

### USE OF LANGUAGE

Thus far I have compared the separate recordings of Brian's main stories on the level of episodic structure as well as considering differences between story versions which occur within episodes. The discussion has explored features such as the construction of stories and the role of logical links, the use of repetition and the relationship between story structure and memory, the borrowing of motifs and characters between stories, and the implications of self-correction and other information provided by the storyteller about his relation to, and understanding of, the stories. I would now like to turn to one last area of inquiry: Brian's use of language, and what this can tell us about his storytelling. I will again compare the existing multiple versions of the same stories to one another, this time in order to see what patterns of language use emerge both within individual story groups (i.e., the groups of recordings of one story) as well as across the entire group of stories.

### Set Language

From the point of view of phrasing and language, the outstanding feature of Brian's storytelling is his use of various kinds of set language. By "set language" I mean phrases and dialogue which are used in the same way in the same context each time Brian tells a story. This language could also be called "formulaic". Such set language is indeed characteristic of Gaelic storytelling, and has been discussed in the scholarly

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<sup>95</sup> Quoted in Bruford 1969: 184 and translated, 205 n. 8.

literature.<sup>96</sup> However, it has nowhere been rigorously defined (although Bruford's chapters on the development of words and runs in Gaelic storytelling (1969: 167-209) are very useful). Perhaps this is due to the fact that the use of set language is so widespread that it would be difficult to define narrowly. James Ross does give a general definition of such language when he refers to "...numerous recurrent expressions...frequently involving rhythm and alliteration" (1959: 10). Bruford, too, discusses runs and set phrases, defining runs as "... set passages of florid description which are introduced by story-tellers into any hero-tale where the appropriate action comes in...." and adds that they are "... recited by heart, the same narrator using exactly the same words whenever a situation occurs...." (1969: 36).<sup>97</sup> He also makes the important point that runs themselves are composed of shorter stock phrases which, in his words, "may be put together to form a run or used separately" (1969: 37). These comments provide a useful starting point for our discussion, for the set language which Brian uses exhibits, to varying degrees, all of these characteristics: sometimes his set phrases exhibit rhythm and alliteration, and sometimes also they occur in exactly the same form in the same place in the same story. However, in order to fully understand Brian's set language, we must first try to define it with more precision, after which we may examine the role it plays in Brian's storytelling.

### **Different Types of Set Language**

#### ***Type 1 Set Language***

Brian's set language may be divided into three different types. The first -- Type 1 Set Language -- comprises phrases, epithets, formulae and dialogue which are recognisably drawn from what Bruford refers to as "the common stock" (1969: 223, n. 21) of storytelling language which seems to have achieved a certain currency and widespread use in Gaelic Scotland and Ireland. This language is often rhythmic and alliterative, is highly fixed, and often sounds archaic. It is also often traceable to manuscript sources, and comprises the type of language which Brian uses in more than one different story (as opposed to more than one version of the *same* story) in similar contexts. Thus such language represents a kind of common stock of storytelling language which could have been drawn upon freely by storytellers as required, and which would have become widespread through just such a practice.

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<sup>96</sup>See e.g. Bruford 1969 and 1983; Delargy 1945; O' Nolan 1987; MacDonald 1989; and Ross 1959. Donald MacAulay's 1982 article on "Register Range and Choice in Scottish Gaelic" is also of interest.

<sup>97</sup>Note also that in the course of research presentations it has been pointed out that linguistic formulae can also incorporate variants. I am grateful to Dr. John Shaw for bringing this to my attention.

Brian has some Type 1 set language in his storytelling, although most of his fixed language is comprised of the next two types, Type 2 and Type 3.

### *Type 2 Set Language*

The next type of set language which Brian uses is highly similar to Type 1, with the exception that these set phrases and pieces of dialogue only occur in one story rather than moving more freely between stories. Thus it is that Brian may have rhythmic and alliterative phrases which appear in a highly identical form from story version to story version, but this same dialogue or phrasing will not appear in other stories. While such set language again may have originated from a common stock of fixed language which was used freely in the storytelling past, the language has become fixed to particular stories in Brian's storytelling, and thus no longer represents a free use of stock elements on Brian's part. Like Type 1, this language is also sometimes traceable to a specific manuscript tradition, but at other times it consists of language which is not noticeably archaic but which seems to have become fossilised in the Stewart family tradition. So it is that there are some phrases which seem quite ordinary, but which nevertheless repeatedly appear in Brian's stories in the same form, and which also appear in versions of the stories recorded by *other* members of the Stewart family (Ailidh Dall, his daughter Mary Stewart, and Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord), giving weight to the supposition that such language or wording has become associated with a particular story in the immediate family tradition.<sup>98</sup> Often this language is noticeably rhythmic or alliterative, marking it out from the "ordinary" language of the rest of the story. Much of Brian's Type 2 set language consists of dialogue, which is not surprising as set dialogue is typical of other Gaelic storytellers as well. Donald Archie MacDonald tells us that the language used for runs and dialogue is that which is most often fixed: "*'Se còmhradh an t-àite eile, a bharrachd air na ruitheannan, far am bheil teacs dualach air fàs stèidhichte....*" ["Dialogue is the other area, in addition to the runs, where traditional text has become fixed..."] (1989: 218, n. 31). Alan Bruford also points to the fixity of dialogue, saying, "The dialogue in standard situations in folk-tales naturally tends to be standardized...." (1969: 195). Brian's Type 2 set language also includes the type of fixed phrases or names which are no longer very meaningful and which Brian does not really understand, as discussed above in the section on "Formulaic Language" in Chapter

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<sup>98</sup>A comparison of the stories recorded from members of Brian's family would make for a very useful and informative study. Such an exhaustive study of the evidence provided by other family recordings is of course beyond the scope of the present work; however, it is hoped that the occasional reference to the evidence provided by these recordings will be a useful addition to this discussion.



Three. These meaningless but obviously archaic -- or at least "traditional" -- words and phrases are most often associated with one particular story, as if Brian learned them as part of a fixed pattern and has retained them as necessary, albeit meaningless, parts of the story.<sup>99</sup>

### ***Type 3 Set Language: "Similar" Language***

Finally, the third kind of set language used by Brian consists of dialogue and other phrasing which does not seem to be identifiably archaic, rhythmic, or otherwise "special", but which nevertheless recurs from story to story in a highly similar form. In fact, it might be better to call this language "similar language" rather than "set language," for it is to highly similar ordinary language to which I wish to refer. Thus the dialogue of almost all of Brian's stories, if not of Type 1 or Type 2, is almost always Type 3. In these cases, the dialogue of the different story versions is not identical, but the degree of similarity is striking, and the overall impression is that the language of the stories is very much "the same." Such "ordinary" but strikingly similar language is not unexpected in Gaelic storytelling: Alan Bruford encountered the same type of language as used by South Uist storytellers. Discussing Angus MacLellan's use of such language (1978: 39), Bruford says that "[t]he language used is in no way remarkable, but the wording ... remains remarkably constant." This last category is the most difficult to characterise, as it refers to a large proportion of the language which Brian uses. It is generally made up of ordinary language which nevertheless seems to have assumed some sort of settled shape in Brian's storytelling, and which he deploys in much the same way and with much the same effect each time he tells a story. Type 3 set language, like Type 2 set language, does not occur between different stories, but rather between different versions of the same story. Rather than representing standardised language which Brian draws on at will to construct the story, I believe that this type of similar language indicates that Brian has internalised certain patterns of language which he associates with specific stories. While I do not think that this represents memorisation, the process of internalisation must be related to the process of memorisation in some way.

It may be interesting here to consider the example of another storyteller whose use of language has received some attention from scholars (Draak 1957; MacDonald 1989, 1983; Bruford 1969, 1978, 1983), that of Duncan MacDonald of South Uist. According to scholars, Duncan MacDonald was a conservative storyteller who often

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<sup>99</sup>A practice which was apparently common amongst storytellers. See Delargy's discussion of the *crua-Ghaoluinn* ("hard Irish") which was not intelligible to listeners (1945: 207).



told stories in a highly similar form from telling to telling, and whose brother Neil also told stories in much the same way. Although Duncan and his brother "... learned some of their father's tales virtually word for word" (Bruford 1978: 34) MacDonald also narrated many other tales in a less fixed form. Bruford describes these latter stories as being comprised of "... narrative wording improvised on a memorised framework, but much of the dialogue learned by heart" (1978: 37). In his earlier 1969 work, Bruford also hypothesises that Duncan MacDonald

...learned the story in the form of tableaux and some set passages of dialogue and description, and gradually came to use a settled form of words from his own mind and the common stock for the rest (223, n. 21).

This idea that MacDonald "came to use a settled form of words from his own mind and the common stock" is most interesting, and it seems to me that the same could generally be said for Brian Stewart, for even when he does use traditional formulae from "the common stock," these seem to be limited to specific contexts, rather than representing a free and arbitrary use of this material as the moment requires. For Brian, the Type 1 and Type 2 phrases *usually* appear in the same stories in the same places; and the rest of his fixed language -- the Type 3 "similar" language -- appears to represent a form of ordinary language which has settled into a fairly predictable form and which he associates with specific stories. (Whether this ordinary language originated with Brian or whether it represents the ordinary language of the stories as used by Brian's grandmother Siùsie is another question which cannot be answered). There is also a point to be made that Type 2 and Type 3 language exist along a spectrum, in the middle of which it is sometimes difficult to differentiate the two. Often the Type 3 language is very "ordinary" but occurs in such a fixed form each time that it is tempting to see it as being more stylised or formulaic than would at first be supposed. And beyond the Type 3 language there is language which again is simply "ordinary" but which still retains a high degree of similarity. Thus it is sometimes difficult to make fine distinctions between one of type of language and another; however, the types of language at the opposite ends of the spectrum are clearly distinguishable from one another, and they are very useful to our discussion of Brian's use of language.

### ***A Word About Runs***

Before turning to an examination of the different types of fixed language, I should note that in the introduction above I have not singled out "runs" for special mention in my discussion of Brian's use of language. This is because although the use of long

runs appears to have been highly characteristic of many Gaelic storytellers, Brian himself uses very few long runs and the vast majority of his set language consists of short set phrases or dialogue. I have already discussed the implications of this above in the section entitled "Possible Reasons for Lack of Long Runs." Therefore, while the long run is an important element of Gaelic storytelling, it is noticeably absent in Brian's repertoire, and it is with the other varieties of fixed language that most of my discussion of language is concerned. However, Brian's use of runs is considered below as part of the broader discussion of fixed language, as well as in the conclusions which I draw about Brian's use of language .

### **Examples - Type 1 Set Language**

Having characterised the types of set language which Brian uses, it will be useful to look at some examples of each type. To begin with, let us look at the first type of set language, that which is recognisably different from "ordinary" language in that it exhibits rhythm, alliteration, a high degree of fixity, may seem to derive from an old motif or manuscript tradition, and which Brian uses in more than one different story (as opposed to more than one version of the *same* story). An example of Type 1 language is the dialogue used when one character puts another character under binding obligations ("*geasan*") in Brian's stories. The standard formula used is something like the following:

"Mo chrosan 's mo gheasan," thuirt i, "trì buaraichean matha sìdh nach stad oidhch' a's gach taigh dhut gus a' faigh thu dhomh-as fios feagal an aon sgeul."<sup>100</sup>

[*"My spells and my crosses," she said, "the three fetters of the fairy [women] that you will not stop a night in [any] house until you obtain for me [the object of quest -- in this case 'true knowledge of the one tale']"*].

This is in fact a rather short version of a formula common in Gaelic stories used to place characters under obligation, numerous examples of which can be found in collections of Gaelic stories (see e.g. J.G. McKay 1940: 228 and following) and in the archives of the School of Scottish Studies.<sup>101</sup> It is not surprising, then, that Brian

<sup>100</sup>*Stòiridh Ladhair*, May 1978. Linguistic Survey of Scotland recording T1006.

<sup>101</sup>Also see Bruford 1969: 196, where he cites the following formula as being "normal in Scotland": *Tha mi gad chur fo gheasaibh 's fo chrosaibh 's fo naoi buaraichean mnatha sìthle siubhla seachrain an laochan beag geàrr donn as miot' agus as mì-threòiriche na thu fhèin a thoirt do chinn 's do chluais 's do chaitheamh beatha dhìot, ma nì thu stad choisèadh no chinn gos am faigh thu mach* [object of quest]. Brian's phrase "*matha sìdh*" probably evolved from an earlier phrase such as the

uses this formula in more than one story (*Stòiridh Ladhair* and *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh*), and that the formula is more or less unchanging as he uses it.

Another example of an old formula which Brian uses occurs in his already discussed episodic run, that in which the hero approaches a giant's castle and battles with the giant's men. Here Brian usually includes the detail that the hero seizes on the man who has the slimmest leg and the largest head, and uses him as a club with which to knock the brains out of the other men.<sup>102</sup> In the 1978 version of *Stòiridh Ladhair* we have the following:

...s rug e air a' fear bu chaoil' cas agus bu mhoth' ceann, agus sgleog e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil' leis.

[...and he seized on the man with the slimmest leg and the largest head, and he bashed the brains out of the others with him.]

And again in 1994:

... rug e air a' fear bu, bu mhoth' ceann 's bu chaoil' cas, 's sgleoc e an t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil'.

[...he seized on the man with the, the largest head and the slimmest leg, and he bashed the brains out of the other ones.]

We also have the same formula used in *Stòiridh Loircein*. Compare the phrase as recorded in 1974:

...rug e air a' fear, 'fear bu mhòth' ceann dhiubh, 's bu chaoile cas. 'S rug e air 'chasan, 's sgleoc e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn aig an doras.

[...he seized on the man, the man with the biggest head of them, and the slimmest leg. And he seized on his legs, and he bashed the brains out of the ones at the door.]

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"*mnatha sìdh*" ("fairy women") which Bruford cites, or "*màthraichean sìdh*" ("fairy mothers"), an example of which can be found in MacNeil 1987: 52.

In his discussion of be-spelling formulae, J.G. McKay (1940: 505) explains the reference to the fairy women's cow fetters as follows: "The dreaded fairy-woman is also invoked against him. If he failed [to obtain the object demanded], she was to meet him, and strike him with the nine cow-fetters which she carried. It must be explained here that even the ordinary cow-fetter or cow-spangel of ordinary mortals was a most ominous instrument.... If struck by them a hero was supposed to be rendered so awkward and silly, so fey and unlucky, that the veriest scum of the populace would be able to overcome him in battle, and take his ear, and his head, and his means of life from him."

<sup>102</sup> Cf. pages 144-147 above for further discussion of this motif.

Other recognisably formulaic language includes stock descriptions, such as the effort which a hero makes to lift his sword and kill his enemy in a battle. In Episode 3 of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, when the hero is about to kill a giant, Brian says:

...thug e an sin an *togail mhòr, eibhinn, aighearach* dhan a' chlaidheamh aig',  
's sgud e an dà cheann dheth.<sup>103</sup>

[...then he gave the great, boisterous, joyful heave to his sword, and he cut the two heads off him.]

Again in the May 1978 recording of *Stòiridh Ladhair*, we get the same phrase when the king kills a giant:

... 's, thug e 'n *togail mhòr, eibhinn, aighearach* dhan fhomhair 's chuir e ri talamh e 's, gheàrr e 'n ceann dheth, leis 'chlaidheamh aig'.

[... and, he gave the great, boisterous, joyful heave to the giant and he put him to the ground and, he cut the head off him, with his sword.]

Brian also uses the phrase in a similar context in Episode 3 of the 1974 recording of *Stòiridh Loircein*:

... 's, thug e an *togail mhòr, eibhinn, aighearach* ud dhan fhomhair, 's chuir e air a dhruim e 's, sgud e an ceann deth.

[... and, he gave that great, boisterous, joyful heave to the giant, and he put him on his back and, he cut the head off him.]

Here then we have an example of the same formula being used in three different stories in a nearly identical form each time.

### **Examples - Type 2 Set Language**

While Brian does at times use the same stock language in more than one story as above, it is more often the case that he only uses the same stock language in different versions of the *same* story. Type 2 set language is therefore very similar to Type 1 in its attributes -- it may be highly alliterative and rhythmic, appearing to derive from the wider common stock of storytelling language -- but it differs in that it only appears in versions of one story. It therefore appears to be the case that the use of this

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<sup>103</sup>November 1973, Linguistic Survey of Scotland tape 965.



set language has become associated in Brian's storytelling with a specific story context.

To begin with an example of language which is recognisably formulaic and drawn from the common storytelling stock, but which appears in only one of Brian's stories, let us look at the situation in which two characters play a game of cards or dice, and the loser of the game asks the winner to name his or her prize. Here the stock phrase is "*Tog brìgh do chluich*" -- "name the price of your gaming" (i.e., name your prize), which is characteristic of a common gaming motif which often appears in Gaelic stories,<sup>104</sup> but which only occurs in Brian's recordings of *Stòiridh Ladhair*. Another such phrase used in this story occurs when one of the main characters, the king, is given his choice of horse as a prize from an otherworldly woman. The woman says to him:

"Uill," thuirt is' ris, "mo bheannachd agad-as, ach mo mhollachd thig gad ionnsaidh."

[*"Well," she said to him, "my blessing to you, but may my curse come towards you."*]<sup>105</sup>

Again, the language here is rhythmic and well known, and the phrase belongs to the type of dialogue which Bruford identifies as that which "...sounds like a series of proverbs...." (1969: 195).

Another example of a known formula which only occurs in one of Brian's stories is the phrasing used in Episode 3 of *Am Bodach Baigeir*. Here Brian uses a set formula to describe how the hero of the story chases after a fox. Consider the following examples from all four recordings of the story:

1974, School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/32/B1:

'S dar a' b'ìosal air-eas b'àird' air a' t-seannach 's dar a' b'àird' air-eas b'ìosal air an t-seannach, gus do ruig e taighean caol, fad', dubh.

[*And when he was lowest the fox was highest and when he was highest the fox was lowest, until he reached a narrow, long, black little house.*]

May 1974, Linguistic Survey tape 954:

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<sup>104</sup>Alan Bruford identifies the motif as an old one (1969: 80).

<sup>105</sup>*Stòiridh Ladhair*, May 1978, Linguistic Survey of Scotland tape T1006.



Agus, eh, dar chaidh e as dèidh 'seannach, far a' b'ìosal air-eas b'àird' air a' t-seannach, 's far a' b'àird' air-eas b'ìosal air an t-seannach, gus do ruig e taighean fad', dubh ann a' sin.

*[And, eh, when he went after the fox, where he was lowest the fox was highest, and where he was highest the fox was lowest, until he reached a long, black little house.]*

1977, Linguistic Survey tape 956:

Far a' b'àird' air-eas b'ìosal air a' t-seannach, 's far a' b'ìosal air-eas b'àird' air a' t-seannach gus do ruig e taighean fad', duaichnidh.

*[Where he was highest the fox was lowest, and where he was lowest the fox was highest until he reached a long, gloomy little house.]*

24 September 1993:

Far a' b'ìosal air-eas b'àird' air an t-seannach, ach. Ruig es' taigh fad', caol, dubh ann a' sin 's, ghnog e aig a' doras.

*[Where he was lowest the fox was highest, but. He reached a long, narrow, black house there and, he knocked at the door.]*

Notice that here the formula, which involves rhythm and alliteration, occurs in much the same way in each version, even in the 1993 version. Notice also that there is a second formula in the excerpt, a stock description of the house which the hero reaches as being "*caol, fad, dubh*" ("narrow, long, black"), or a slightly varied version thereof.

For two more examples from *Am Bodach Baiger*, we turn to Episodes 3 and 4, in which the heroes of the story have reached the "long, narrow, black" house referred to above, and hear a knock at the door. When asked who is there, a voice replies in highly stylised speech that it is "the speckled hen of the one night" who spends one night on the mountain and one night at the house. Compare the following excerpts from the various recordings of the story:

School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/32/B1:

"O chan eil ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i null air beinn, 's bios i nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

*["Oh it's just the speckled hen of the one night. She's hither and thither on the hill, and she's a night here."]*

May 1974, Linguistic Survey tape 954:

"O chan eil," thuirt is', "ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i null air oidhch', 's bios i nall air oidhch', 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

[*"O it's only," she said, "the speckled hen of the one night. She's hither and thither at night, and she's a night here."*]

1977, Linguistic Survey tape 956:

"Ooo," thuirt i ris, "cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i a-null air oidh-beinn, 's bios i a-nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

[*"Ooo," she said to him, "[it is] the speckled hen of the one night. She's hither and thither at night-- on the hill, and she's a night here."*]

24 September 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

"O chan eil ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i null air beinn, 's bios i a-nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

[*"O it's only the speckled hen of the one night. She's hither and thither on the hill, and she's a night here."*]

Here the speech is just as formalised as the Type 1 speech discussed above, the chief difference being that Brian only uses these phrases in the story *Am Bodach Baigeir*. Similarly, when the hag enters the house and begins to get bigger and bigger, the hero comments on this transformation and the dialogue is again fixed:

School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/32/B1:

"Dhia, a Chaillich," thuirt e, "tha thu 'fàs mòr."

"Och chan eil ach m'iteagan 's m'oitheagan," thuirt i, "tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

[*God, old woman," he said, "you are getting big."*

*"Och, it's just my feathers and my [down],"*<sup>106</sup> *she said, "flaring up by the embers [of the fire]."*]

May 1974, Linguistic Survey tape 954:

..."Dhia, a Chaillich, tha thu 'fas mòr."

"Och," thuirt i ris, "m'iteagan 's m'oitheagan tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

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<sup>106</sup>The word *m'oitheagan* is something of a nonsense word which alliterates with *m'iteagan*, "my feathers." I have supplied the word "down" in this and the following translations in order to provide an appropriate approximation of the phrase. See my comment on Brian's use of this word in the following paragraph.

[*God, old woman, you are getting big.*"]

"Och," she said to him, "[it's] my feathers and my [down] flaring up by the embers [of the fire]."]

1977, Linguistic Survey tape 956:

"Tha thu 'fàs mòr, a Chaillich."

Agus, "Och," thuirt i, "chan eil ach m'iteagan is m'oiteagan," thuirt i, "tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

[*"You are getting big, old woman."*]

And, "Och," she said, "it's only my feathers and my [down]," she said, "flaring up by the embers [of the fire]."]

24 September 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

"O mo chreach, a Chailleach!" thuirt e, "tha thu 'fàs mòr."

"O," thuirt i, "m'iteagan is m'oiteagan tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

[*"Alas, old woman!" he said, "you are getting big."*]

"Oh," she said, "[it's] my feathers and my [down] flaring up by the embers [of the fire]."]

It is interesting to note that the word "*m'oiteagan*" as used in this last phrase represents one of the "nonsense words" which Brian has preserved in his storytelling. In a recorded discussion about *Am Bodach Baigeir* on 1 July 1994, I interrupted Brian to ask him about this word, and while he was able to translate "*m'iteagan*" as "my feathers," he was unable to say what "*m'oiteagan*" meant. The conversation was as follows:

**B.S.:** ....Thuirt e rith' rithist, "[Och, a Chaillich,] tha thu fàs mòr."

"Och," thuirt i [...] "m'iteagan 's m'oiteagan tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

**C.Z.:** 'S dè tha "m'iteagan"?

**B.S.:** Feathers, feathers.

**C.Z.:** M'iteagan, 's dè tha "m'oiteagan"?

**B.S.:** "M'òiteagan" I don't know.

[**B.S.:** .... He said to her again, "[Och, old woman,] you are getting big."

"Och," she said [...] "my feathers and my ['oiteagan' - the word in question] are flaring up by the embers [i.e., the embers of the fire]."]

**C.Z.:** And what is "m'iteagan"?

**B.S.:** Feathers, feathers.

**C.Z.:** "My feathers," and what is "m'oiteagan"?

***Examples of Type 2 Formulae which are More "Ordinary"***

There are many more examples of such stylised language being associated with particular stories in Brian's repertoire -- far too many to explore individually. However, it is worthwhile emphasising that much of this "Type 2" set language is much the same as "Type 1" except for the fact that it is only associated with one particular story in Brian's repertoire -- thus the distinction between Type 1 and Type 2 is to a large extent an artificial one, constructed to help to discuss Brian's use of language with greater precision. However, also included in Type 2 set language is some language which, although still formulaic, is closer to "ordinary" language (and indeed to Type 3 language, which is discussed below) than the examples at the more formalised end of the spectrum. One such example also occurs in *Am Bodach Baigeir*, this time in Episode 1. Here the hero is in bed with his wife, and he hears a sound outside the house. When he asks his wife what it is, his wife replies that it is a fox which wants chasing, and the hero replies "Well, if he ever got chasing, he'll get chasing tonight." Here the wording is not as specialised as that which we saw in the "*cearc bhruchd na h-aon oidhche*" and the "*m'iteagan 's m'oitheagan*" examples, but there is still a degree of rhythm to the phrase, and each time Brian uses it, it occurs in a highly similar form. Compare the following:

School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/32/B1:

[Episode 3] "O uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

[Episode 4] "O ma tha e ag iarraidh 'ruagadh riamh, gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

[Episode 3] ["Oh well, if he ever got chasing, he'll get chasing tonight."]

[Episode 4] ["Oh if he ever wanted chasing, he'll get chasing tonight."]

May 1974, Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 954:

[Episode 3] "Uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh," thuirt e riutha (*sic*), "gheobh e 'ruagadh nochd."

[Episode 4] "Uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

[Episode 3] ["Well, if he ever got chasing," he said to them (*sic*), "he'll get chasing tonight."]

[Episode 4] ["Well, if he ever got chasing he'll get chasing tonight."]

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<sup>107</sup>In J.G. McKay 1960, the similar phrase "*Tha mo chiteagan [is mo thopagan] ag éirigh ris an teine*" is translated as "It is only my duds and tufts standing out with the warmth of the fire" (304-305; see also 378-383).

1977, Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 956:

[Episode 3] "Uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh," thuirt e, "gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

[Episode 4] "Uill," thuirt e, "ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

[Episode 3] [*"Well, if he ever got chasing," he said, "he'll get chasing tonight."*]

[Episode 4] [*"Well," he said, "if he ever got chasing he'll get chasing tonight."*]

24 September 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

[Episode 3] "Och, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh a-riamh, gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

[Episode 3] [*"Och, if he ever got chasing, he'll get chasing tonight."*]

Thus while the language may at first glance appear to be "ordinary," the repetition of it in every recorded version of the story shows that it is stock dialogue which plays a formulaic role, i.e., expressing the same idea in a given context. The phrase is also somewhat rhythmic and alliterative, which helps to identify it as "special" language as opposed to "ordinary" language.

Another example in which the language is even more "ordinary," exhibiting no alliteration or marked rhythmic patterns, occurs in the story *Am Maraiche Màirneal*. Here in Episode 2 of the story, the eponymous *Maraiche Màirneal* is sailing to the island of Loch Leug with the hero of the story. The woman of the island sees the *Maraiche's* ship on the horizon, and she remarks that she believes that she sees the top of the mast of the *Maraiche Màirneal's* ship coming one more time. Here the phrase "*'tighinn aon uair fhathast(aich)*" ("coming one more time") is in itself unremarkable, but it is consistently used by Brian in all four of his versions (three of which are from the 1990s) and as such it presents itself as "set language". Compare the following excerpts from the recorded versions:

1974, School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/26:

"O, uill," thuirt i, "thig e às an iarrach no as uarach, ach shin agai' bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaiche Mhàirneil 'tighinn aon uair fhathast."

[*"Oh, well," she said, "it may come from any which way, but there you have the top of the mast of the Seaworthy Mariner's ship coming one more time."*]



14 April 1993, Tape 1 of 2:

"Cha chreid mi," thuirt i, "nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaiche Mhàirneil 'tighinn aon uair fhathastaich."

[*"I do believe," she said, "that that's the top of the mast of the Seaworthy Mariner's ship coming one more time."*]

31 March 1995, Tape 2 of 2:

"Uill," thuirt i, "cha chreid mi nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaich' 'tighinn aon uair fhathastaich."

[*"Well," she said, "I do believe that that's the top of the mast of the Seaworthy Mariner's ship coming one more time."*]

18 September 1995, Tape 1 of 1:

"Uill," thuirt i, "cha chreid mi nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaiche Mhàirneal a' tighinn aon uair fhathastaich."

[*"Well," she said, "I do believe that that's the top of the mast of the Seaworthy Mariner's ship coming one more time."*]

Interestingly, Brian also uses this phrase "*a' tighinn aon uair fhathastaich*" in another story. In his earliest version of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'* (SA1958/72), Brian uses this phrase when St. Patrick sees Oisean approaching his house. He says:

... "Uill," thuirt e, "tha mise meallt', mur h-e sin Oisean, 'tighinn aon uair fhathast."

[*..."Well," he said, "I'm deceived, if that's not Oisean, coming one more time."*]

While Brian does not use this phrase again in his 1973 or 1979 tellings of the story, he did use it once more when he told me a fragment of the story in 1994. Here he says:

When he saw Oisean coming, "Oh," he says, "*cha chreid mi nach e sin Oisean 'tighinn aon uair fhathast.*"

[*When he saw Oisean coming, "Oh," he says, "I do believe that that is Oisean coming one more time."*]

Here then we have an example of a phrase which consists of seemingly "ordinary language" but which nevertheless has taken on a formulaic function in Brian's

storytelling. Moreover, its fixed and formulaic nature is proven by the fact that Brian uses it to express the same idea in a similar context in not one but two stories -- an unusual occurrence, as I have stressed that usually these formulae are only associated with one particular story. As such, this example not only serves to illustrate the way in which a storyteller may use set language, but also shows how the storyteller may in fact contribute to the spread and development of the fixed language; for perhaps what we have here is an instance of a phrase originating in one specific story context and spreading to another. Of course it is possible that the process occurred differently in this case, but in general it seems logical to suppose that the spread of formulae from one story to another could take place in just such a way.

### ***Formulae Specific to Brian's Storytelling or Immediate Family***

When looking to the Type 2 set language which is on the more "ordinary" end of the spectrum, what is striking is the extent to which some of these phrases are seemingly commonplace and not particularly memorable; and yet, our storyteller remembers them and uses them in the same way over a span of decades. Moreover, some of these seemingly mundane phrases are also used by other members of Brian's family when they tell stories, providing further evidence that the phrases are indeed fixed. For instance, in Episode 4 of Brian's 1974 version of *Stòiridh Ladhair*, the king loses a game of dice to an otherworldly woman, and is set under obligations by her to obtain "*fios feagal an aon sgeul*" ("true knowledge of the one tale"). The king asks the woman if anyone has ever succeeded in such a quest, to which she replies that some have succeeded and some have not:

Agus, thuirt i, thuirt e rith' rithist, "An d'fhuair gin riamh e?"  
"Cuid a fhuair, 's cuid nach d'fhuair."

[*And, she said, he said to her again, "Has anyone ever obtained it?"*  
*"Some have, and some have not."*]

This is a seemingly mundane phrase, but in the April 1995 recording of *Stòiridh Ladhair*, Brian uses the same exact dialogue, this time when the woman sends the king on a quest for "*ceann fear agus filidh*" (again literally "the head of a man and a poet," i.e., a certain giant's head):

"An d'fhuair gin riamh e?"  
"Cuid a fhuair, cuid nach d'fhuair."

[*"Has anyone ever obtained it?"*]

*"Some have, some have not."*]

Interestingly, this is the first time in 21 years that Brian uses this dialogue in a recorded version of the story. What is more remarkable still is that his cousin, Mary Stewart, uses the same dialogue in her 1957 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*.<sup>108</sup> Here Fionn asks *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* to go to *Eilean nam Fear Mòr* ("the Isle of the Big Men") to obtain *Còrn an Leathraich* (a magic drinking horn) for him. *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* asks whether anyone has ever succeeded in this quest, and as in Brian's stories, Fionn replies that some have succeeded and some have not:

"D'fhuair gin a-riamh e?" thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

"Uill," thuirt es', "cuid a fhuair, cuid nach d'fhuair."

[*"Has anyone ever obtained it?" said Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.*

*"Well," he said, "some have, and some have not."*]

Thus while this language is at first glance ordinary, it has taken on a formulaic function in not only Brian's storytelling but in his cousin's storytelling as well. While Alan Bruford stresses that only language which is "interesting enough to be worth remembering" (1969: 167) as well as easy to remember will be passed on in the oral tradition, here we have an example of a very ordinary piece of dialogue being faithfully retained. (Admittedly, its simplicity makes it *easy* to remember: but it is certainly far from being striking). The fact that both Brian and Mary use this set dialogue indicates that they heard it from the same source (Mary cites her grandmother Siùsie as the source for her version of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, so it is fair to assume that both Brian and Mary heard this phrase from her), and further, it indicates a high degree of fidelity to the original source of the story, even when the phrasing in question is not especially marked by alliteration or other similar memorable qualities. This is yet another indication that the ethos of Brian's immediate storytelling context was a conservative one which valued the faithful retention and telling of the stories in a given way, as they were originally heard.

One other similar example is also of interest, both for the light it sheds on Brian's storytelling dynamic, and the insight it provides into the way in which he may remember details. In Episode 5 of Brian's version of *Stòiridh Ladhair*, the king is sent on a quest for "*ceann fear agus filidh*" ("the head of *"fear agus filidh*," i.e., a

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<sup>108</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1957/48/A4 & B1.

certain giant's head) and he is told that no one may go with him on this quest, not even his faithful companion Ladhar, a detail which sticks in Brian's memory. In the first recording of the story (SA 1974/32/A4), Brian cannot actually remember the content of this episode, but he remembers the fact that Ladhar could not accompany the king on his quest. As discussed in the section on "Similar Episodes" above, the recording shows that Brian rehearses the story in an effort to remember what happens. He says:

Ceann fear agus filidh. 'S chan fhaodadh gin bhith cuide ris ach, eh, e fhèin. Chan fhaodadh e Ladhar thoir' leis. Chan fhaodadh e creutair thoir leis ach e fhèin. Ach seall, cha, chan eil cuimhn', cuimhn' agam, ged a bheireadh si' an ceann dith, ciamar a bha ceann fear agus filidh.

*["The head of 'fear agus filidh'" (i.e., the object of the quest). And no one could be with him but, eh, himself. He couldn't take Ladhar with him. He couldn't take a single creature with him but himself. But look, I can't, I can't remember, even if you gave me the end of it, how it was with "the head of 'fear agus filidh'".]*

In Brian's other versions of the story, he uses the same wording to refer to this detail that Ladhair could not accompany the king. In the May 1978 version, the king is told by the woman that no one may accompany him on his quest -- "*Chan fhaod gin a dhol ann ach thu fhèin*" ("No one may go but yourself") -- and the king then relays this news to Ladhar: "*Chan fhaod thu bhith ann,*" *thuirt e, "Ladhar Laochain," thuirt e, "chan fhaod thus' bhith ann."* ["You may not be there," he said, "Ladhar, little hero," he said, "you may not be there."]

Brian again uses highly similar language in his 1994 and 1995 versions of the story as well. Compare the following excerpts:

14 May 1994:

Agus thuirt e ri Ladhar, "*Chan fhaod thus' bhith cuide rium an dràdaich. Feumaidh mi fholbh leum fhèin.*"

*[And he said to Ladhar, "You may not be with me now. I must go by myself."]*

1 April 1995:

"O, ma tha, Ladhair," *thuirt e, "chan fhaod thus' a bhith ann. Chan fhaod thu, chan fhaod thu, thuirt i rium nach fhaodadh gin dhol, [] ach mi-fhèin."*

*["Oh, well, Ladhar," he said, "you may not be there. You may not, you may not, she said to me that no one could go, [] except myself."]*



Clearly Brian associates this phrasing with the story -- even, as we saw in the 1974 recording, when he cannot remember the content of the episode. We have also seen evidence that this detail is an important trigger to Brian's memory of the story: in the above examination of the joint 1973 interview in which Brian and his cousin Mary Stewart discuss *Stòiridh Ladhair*, it was seen that both Brian and Mary clearly state that Ladhar could not accompany the king on his second quest, a fact which seems to have stuck in both their memories and which seems to play an important role in the way in which they remember the structure of the story. In addition, Brian's uncle Ailidh Dall also uses the same wording in his own recording of *Stòiridh Ladhair*. Here the king is told by the otherworldly woman that he must go unaccompanied on a quest to "*Eilean nam Fear mòr*" ("the Isle of the Big Men"). The king's response, in the form of his lament to Ladhar, is the by now familiar refrain: "*O Ladhar Laochain, thuirt e ri Ladhar, chan fhaod thu bhith ann*" ("Oh Ladhar, little hero," he said to Ladhar, "you may not be there").<sup>109</sup>

This evidence that the same rather ordinary phrasing was retained by two members of Brian's immediate family (including one of an older generation), together with the above examples of Brian's similar language used in his recordings of this story, would be enough to provide a striking example of seemingly mundane language taking on an important mnemonic role for our storyteller and being retained by him in a fixed form. However, there is an additional detail which makes this case still more interesting. In 1995 I met a cousin of Brian's, Mr. Alec John Williamson of Edderton, also a Gaelic-speaking traveller and related to Brian through Brian's grandmother, Siùsie (Siùsie's sister, Cleimidh, was Mr. Williamson's great-grandmother). Thus Mr. Williamson is linked to Brian through the source of Brian's stories, and it was evident from my discussion with Mr. Williamson that he had been exposed to the same family storytelling context as Brian, and had heard many of the same stories that Brian heard. I was asking Mr. Williamson whether he knew various stories, and when I mentioned *Stòiridh Ladhair* he said he had heard it but could not tell it, and then immediately said, "*Ladhair Laochain, chan fhaodhadh e a bhith ann*" ("Ladhar [the] little hero, he could not be there"). Thus this same phrase had stayed in Mr. Williamson's mind over the decades, and is all the more striking for the way in which Mr. Williamson spontaneously uttered it and for his retention of the term of endearment "*Ladhar Laochain*". Again, then, we see that a seemingly unmemorable

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<sup>109</sup>School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1957/37/1. Transcribed by Ian Paterson.



and "ordinary" phrase can be remembered over time, and that somehow the storyteller associates such language with a particular story -- perhaps, in fact, remembers the story *because* he remembers the language. This also reinforces the impression that the storytelling in Brian's immediate family context had a retentive nature and that there was a common storytelling idiom used by Brian and the storytellers in his immediate family. Thus Brian's use of language may reflect the use of language amongst his family for the last generation or two.

### **Examples of Type 3 Language: "Similar" Language**

Finally, to turn to Type 3 language, I must begin by saying that rather than referring to such language as "set" it would be better to refer to it as "similar." This is the language which, although it does not appear to be alliterative, rhythmic, or otherwise "special," still occurs again and again in Brian's stories in roughly the same form. Here I am not referring to isolated sentences or pieces of dialogue, but to entire sections of stories which are highly similar from one telling to another. Indeed, such "similar" language is the type of language which occurs most frequently in Brian's storytelling, and it would be impossible to cite every example as some of these examples would comprise large chunks of entire stories. Thus while I have noted that *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh* has very little Type 1 or Type 2 set language, the fact is that a very high proportion of the dialogue in the versions of this story is highly "similar" from telling to telling. We can conjecture that in the absence of historical formulae, perhaps the language which our storyteller uses still tends to become fixed in set shapes or patterns. Let us consider a few examples.

In *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh*, a king's son is told by his stepmother that she would like to give him a present. The boy protests that he has never given his stepmother a present, but she tells him that this does not matter and proceeds to offer him his choice of horse from her stables. Compare the similar language used in each of the recorded versions:

School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/26/A1:

[*Stepmother to boy:*] "...Agus, tha mi ag iarraidh prèusant thoir' dhut."

"Och," thuirt 'balach rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèusant dhuibh fhèin."

[*Stepmother to boy:*] "...And, I want to give you a present."

"Och," said the boy to her, "I've never given a present to yourself."]

May 1974, Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 954:

[*Stepmother to boy:*] "O uill," thuirt i, "cha tug mi prèusant riamh dhut."

"Och," thuirt a' leas-mhac rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèusant riamh dhuibh fhèin."

[*Stepmother to boy: "Oh well," she said, "I've never given you a present."*  
*"Och," said the step-son to her, "I've never given a present to yourself."*]

April 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

"...Nis," thuirt i ris, "seo," thuirt i, "prèusant bhuam-as, aon 'sam bith dhe na h-eich tha sin. Aon 'sam bith a thogras thu, thoir leis 'sann leat-as a tha e."  
"Och uill," thuirt e, am balach ris a' bhàn-righ, "cha tug mis' dad a-riamh, cha tug mis' prèusant dhuì'-fhèin."

[*"...Now," she said to him, "here is," she said, "a present from me, any one of the horses there. Whichever one you want, take it it's yours."*  
*"Och well," he said, the boy to the queen, "I've never given a thing, I've never given a present to yourself."*]

October 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

Agus thuirt a' bhàn-righ ris' ma-- a' ghille, "Tha mi 'dol a thoir' dhut prèusant 'n diugh," thuirt i.  
"O," thuirt a' gill' rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèusant dhuibh fhèin."

[*And the queen said to -- the boy, "I'm going to give you a present today," she said.*  
*"Oh," said the boy to her, "I've never given a present to yourself."*]

As can be seen, all four versions above use highly similar language to express similar ideas. While the language is not absolutely identical in each excerpt, the degree of similarity is very high indeed, and this is very typical of Brian's storytelling across the repertoire.

Later in this story the hero finds a strand of hair on the road, and when he picks it up his horse tells him that he should leave the hair where it is or it will get him into trouble. The boy expresses surprise that the horse can speak, to which the horse replies that has a certain amount of speech. As above, this incident is expressed in highly similar language in each episode. Compare the four versions:

1974, School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/26/A1:

Thuirt an t-each ris, "Cuir-- fàg sin," thuirt e, "fàg a' falt sin no gheobh e ann an trioblaid thu."  
Thu' e sin sùil air an each 's thuirt e, "Bheil bruidhinn agad-as?"  
"O," thuirt e, "tha an uibhir sin de bhruidhinn agam. 'S tha mis' ag inns' dhut," thuirt e, "mur cuir thus' air folbh a' falt tha sin, gheobh thus' ann an trioblaid leis."

*[The horse said to him, "Put-- leave that," he said, "leave that hair or it will get you into trouble."*

*He looked at the horse and he said, "Can you speak?"*

*"Oh," he said, "I have a certain amount of speech. And I'm telling you," he said, "if you don't throw away that hair, you'll get into trouble with it."]*

May 1974, Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 954:

Thug an t-each dubh sùil air 's, thuirt e ris, "Fàg a' falt sin," thuirt e. Thug a' gil-- am balach sùil air an each, thuirt e, "Beil bruidhinn agad-as?" thuirt e.

"Uill," thuirt e, "tha an uibhir sin dhe bhruidhinn agam." Thuirt e, "Tha mis' 'g inns' dhut-as a' falt sin fhàgail, na gheobh e ann an trioblaid thu."

*[The horse looked at him and, he said to him, "Leave that hair," he said.*

*The la-- the boy looked at the horse, he said, "Can you speak?" he said.*

*"Well," he said, "I have a certain amount of speech." He said, "I'm telling you to leave that hair, or it will get you into trouble."]*

April 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

Thuirt an t-each ris, "Nis," thuirt es', "cuimhnich, cuireas thu 'falt sin air folbh, cui-- na tog, na cum sin. Tilg air folbh e.... Uill, uill, [mur thil'], tha mis' ag inns' dhut, gheobh sin ann an dragh thu."

"Bheil thus' ag ràdh sin? Bheil thus' 'bruidhinn?" thuirt e.

"Uill tha an uibhir sin de bhruidhinn agam," thuirt an t-each ris. "Tha fhios agam," thuirt e, "gu' faigh e thus' ann an dragh."

*[The horse said to him, "Now," he said, "remember, throw that hair away, thro-- don't take, don't keep that. Throw it away.... Well, well, [if you don't], I'm telling you, that will get you into difficulty."*

*"Are you saying that? Are you speaking?" he said.*

*"Well I have a certain amount of speech," said the horse to him. "I know," he said, "that it will get you into difficulty."]*

October 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

Thionndaidh an t-each sin, "Uill," thuirt an t-each ris, 'n t-each dubh ris, "Tilg sin air folbh," thuirt e, "na gheobh e ann a' mòran dragh thu. A' falt sin."

"Och," thuirt es', chuir e [na] phòcaid e. "Bheil bruidhinn agad-s'?"

"Tha an uibhir sin de bhruidhinn agam," thuirt an t-each ris. "Cuir thus' a' falt sin air folbh bhuat."

*[The horse turned then, "Well," said the horse to him, the black horse to him, "Throw that away," he said, "or it will get you into a lot of difficulty. That hair."*

*"Och," he said, he put it [in his] pocket. "Can you speak?"*

*"I have a certain amount of speech," said the horse to him. "Put that hair away from you."]*

Here again the high degree of similarity between the language of the various passages is apparent. Note that some of the phrases appear to have become fixed, much as the phrase "*a' tighinn aon uair fhathast*" ("coming one more time") in *Am Maraiche Màirneal* which was discussed above in relation to Type 2 set language. Here, for example, when the horse admits that he has a certain degree of speech, he uses the same phrase each time: "*Tha an uibhir sin de bhruidhinn agam*" ("I have a certain amount of speech"). Perhaps, as suggested above, we are witnessing one step in the process by which ordinary dialogue may *become* fixed and eventually spread to other contexts.

Looking to another example of "similar" language, let us look to Episode 4 of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*. In this episode, the hero of the story has attended a ball arranged by a princess. The hero has in fact rescued the princess by slaying some giants who were intent on kidnapping her, but the princess's father and the rest of the kingdom mistakenly believe that the king's cook slew the dragons. The princess therefore sets up a test of strength so that all the men at the ball must attempt to break an ox's shank-bone with their bare hands. When the cook makes his attempt, he hurts his hand and cries out in pain. However, when the true hero attempts the feat he breaks the shank and his blow is so mighty that the four legs of the table crumble beneath it. The princess then asks her father who he thinks saved her from the giants – the man who was able to break the ox's shank bone, or the man who was unable to do so. The king replies that he would think that the man who could break the shank bone would have been the man who saved her, whereupon proof of this fact is offered and the story continues. Compare the following excerpts from the different versions to see how similar the language is from telling to telling:

1973, Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 965:

Ach thàinig a' sin 'm balach bha seo air adhairt 's, thog e 'dhòrn 's bhuail e an cnàimh. 'S dar a bhuail e an cnàimh, dh'fholbh an cnàimh 'na smàl. Chuir e 'na smàl air a' bhòrd e, 's bhris e 'bòrd cuide ris. Agus chaidh sin 'chail' gus a' bhalach 's thuirt i ris a' rìgh, a h-athair, "Cò," thuirt i ris, "shaoileadh sibh-s' a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean: am fear a bhris an cnàimh na am fear nach do bhris an cnàimh?"

*[But then this boy came forward and, he raised his fist and he struck the bone. And when he struck the bone, the bone was crushed. He crushed it on the table, and he broke the table along with it. And then the girl went to the boy and she said to the king, her father, "Who," she said to him, "would you think it was that saved me from the giants: the man who broke the bone, or the man who didn't break the bone?"]*



1974, School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/27/B3 & 28/A1:

'S thog e 'dhòrn 's thug e [daolong]<sup>110</sup> air a' chnàimh 's, chuir e an cnàimh 'na sgonn air a' bhòrd, 's dh'fhòlbh na ceithir casan bhon a' bhòrd. Bhrist e na ceithir casan. Agus thug a' sin nighean 'rìgh sùil air a h-àthair.

"Nis," thuirt i ri h-àthair, "cò chreideadh sibh-s' an duin' a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean? An duin' a bhris an cnàimh, no am fear nach do bhris an cnàimh?"

*[And he raised his fist and he gave a blow to the bone, and he crushed the bone on the table, and the four legs of the table collapsed. He broke the four legs.*

*And then the king's daughter looked at her father.*

*"Now," she said to her father, "who would you believe was the man who saved me from the giants? The man who broke the bone, or the man who didn't break the bone?"*]

24 September 1993, Tape 1 of 1:

Thog es' a dhòrn 's chuir e an cnàimh 'na sgonn air a' bhòrd.

Thuirt i sin ri a h-athair, "Cò chreideadh si'," thuirt i, "am fear a mharbh -- a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean, 'm fear a bhris an cnàimh, no am fear nach do bhris e?"

*[He raised his fist and he crushed the bone on the table.*

*Then she said to her father, "Who would you believe," she said, "was the man who killed -- who saved me from the giants, the man who broke the bone, or the man who didn't break it?"*]

18 September 1995:

Ach thog am balach aon dhorn, 's thug e aon bhuill' às, chuir e an cnàimh 'na smùid air a', air a' bhòrd.

'S char i nis gu h-athair, a' chail, 's thuirt i ris, "Cò shaoileadh si'," thuirt i, "am fear a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean? Am fear a bhris an cnàimh, no am fear a chiùrr a làimh?"

*[But the boy raised one fist, and he gave one blow [to] it, he pulverised the bone on the, on the table.*

*And now she went to her father, the girl, and she said to him, "Who would you think," she said, "was the man who saved me from the giants? The man who broke the bone, or the man who hurt his hand?"*]

This example of similar language occurring from version to version of the same story is highly representative of Brian's storytelling, and those interested in further

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<sup>110</sup>This word appears to mean "a blow" to Brian. See my more detailed footnote on this word in the November 1973 transcript of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*.



illustrations of the similar language in Brian's stories need only turn to the story transcriptions in Appendix B. What is interesting is that although this language is clearly different than the examples of Type 1 and Type 2 set language examined above, there is nevertheless a similar dynamic behind all of these types of language, that which keeps the overall pattern and shape of Brian's storytelling essentially the same. Of course there are instances in which Brian's language is more innovative -- for example, in Episode 3 of his 1974 version of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* (SA 1974/27/B3 & 28/A1), the hero cries out in alarm when he sees the huge two-headed giant whom he must fight:

"O mo chreach!" thuirt e, " 'se fear mòr tha seo," thuirt e 's, "tha dà cheann air."

["Oh alas!" he said, "this man is big," he said and, "he has two heads."]

Here Brian's phrasing is colourful and evocative, and is unparalleled in his other recordings of this story (although the motif of the second giant having two heads is common enough). Still, this instance is an exception, and in the vast majority of Brian's storytelling, the dialogue and other wording exhibits sameness, not innovation. Moreover, as the language which Brian uses throughout the stories is a combination of this Type 3 "similar language" and the even more fixed Type 1 and Type 2 set language, the overall effect is an overwhelming impression that the story versions are highly similar to each other.

### **Frequency of Type 1 and Type 2 Set Language**

While the Type 3 "similar language" is the norm for much of Brian's storytelling and is used widely in all of Brian's stories, it might be useful to ask whether the distribution of Type 1 and Type 2 set language shows any patterns across the stories, and whether certain stories exhibit more or less Type 1 and Type 2 set language than others. The answer is that there is a marked difference between the different stories in terms of how much of this type of set language occurs in them. The three stories which have the most Type 1 and Type 2 language are *Am Bodach Baigeir*, *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, and *Stòiridh Ladhair*. Next come three stories with a lesser degree of Type 1 and Type 2 fixed language, *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, *Stòiridh Loircein*, and *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn*'. Finally, *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh*, *Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich*, and *Am Maraiche Màirneal* exhibit almost no Type 1 or Type 2 set language. The implications of this differentiation between language use in the various stories is significant, for it again points to a fixed storytelling dynamic on Brian's

part. Not only are the stories highly stable in terms of episodic structure, and not only is the fixed language highly stable, but the type of fixed language used for each story is also stable.

In considering the distribution of the Type 1 and Type 2 fixed language, it is perhaps not surprising that one of the stories which uses the most such language is *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, which derives from the native tradition and may have found its way into the oral tradition from manuscripts.<sup>111</sup> Thus certain phrases and dialogue may have been associated with the story from an early time. Similarly, *Stòiridh Loircein* is related to the native *Eachtra Iollainn Airmdheirg*, again a popular native romance, as well as to the international AT 301 type which was very popular in Gaelic storytelling; and *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* (AT 300) and *Am Bodach Baigeir* (AT 303) also belong to the international tale types which Delargy assures us comprise "... the oldest stratum of our existing body of [Gaelic] folk-tales...." (1945: 211). Along with *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'*, these stories represent some of the most popular and widespread stories in the Gaelic tradition, and it is perhaps not surprising that these stories contain a high proportion of stylised language representative of the common stock of storytelling idiom. *Stòiridh Ladhair* also contains a high degree of set language, but the history of the tale is unclear, making it more difficult to speculate on its development and related use of traditional idiom. The other three stories considered are international types which, admittedly, do not seem to have been as popular as the six stories just mentioned, and perhaps this accounts for the very small amount of Type 1 and Type 2 set language in these stories. Whatever the true reason for the distribution of such language, it is, as I have stated, significant that the type of language used appears to depend on the story, for this indicates that the storyteller's use of language is, at least in part, dictated by the story itself rather than being a matter of personal choice.

### **Conclusions about Brian's use of Language**

While Brian does not tell his stories in the same way, "word for word," each time, and while he does not seem to have "memorised" the language used in his stories in the general sense of that word, much of his language is constant (Type 1 and Type 2), and a good deal of the Type 3 ordinary language is highly similar from telling to telling and so appears to be nearly as fixed in our storyteller's mind as the Type 1 and 2 language. The fact that certain phrases and formulae are only used by our storyteller

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<sup>111</sup>See Bruford's discussion of the *Cèdach* story, from which *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* derives, 1969: 123 ff.

in certain stories adds to the impression of fixity, while the fact that different stories consistently make use of different types of set language strongly indicates that Brian's use of language is highly dependent on the story he is telling. Further, while the examples of Type 1 and Type 2 set language make it clear that Brian has a command of a large amount of traditional storytelling idiom, his consistent use of this material in the same contexts makes it clear that rather than representing a stock of language from which Brian may pick and choose at will, this language is actually an echo of the language of the stories as Brian first heard them -- literally "*mar a chuala e*" -- and represents his attempt to tell the stories in the same way. The evidence of similar language use by close family members lends further weight to this supposition. Brian's limited use of long runs also indicates that his use of language is conservative and fixed, as the long run, like other traditional idiom, seems to be associated only with specific story contexts. Thus while formulaic dialogue and other traditional devices may have been used in the past for more flexible or innovative purposes, Brian's use of these devices in consistently fixed contexts points not to a creative dynamic, but to a re-productive one.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### Summary

The analysis of Brian Stewart's stories on several different levels has enabled us to identify a number of important patterns and features of his storytelling. The construction of plot summaries and the corresponding episode charts facilitated the comparison of the separate recordings of Brian's main stories at the level of episodic structure. The ensuing discussion of similarity and variation between story versions led to the exploration of important features such as optional repeat episodes, the confusion of parallel or similar episodes, and the role of logical links and their relationship to story structure. It was seen that while some story versions differed from each other in that optional repeat episodes were not included, the basic plot and structure of such story versions were still highly similar to one another, contributing to an impression of overall structural stability between versions. Such omissions of repeatable but non-essential material were contrasted with omissions of episodes which do seriously affect the outcome of the story, and examples of each kind of omission were examined. The relationship between story structure and memory was also discussed, and the possibility that the storyteller remembers story content and story form separately was considered. Continuing on the topic of memory, conscious rehearsal and repetition were seen to be important tools by which the storyteller remembers the stories in a particular form. The storytelling context and the passage

of time were also considered as important factors which could influence individual story recordings and cause differences between earlier and later versions of the same story.

Moving on to consider differences between story versions which occur *within* episodes (rather than differences in story structure at the episodic level), the discussion considered variation between versions such as the compression or expansion of detail and the presence or absence of repeatable material within stories, both of which again indicated the importance of the storytelling context and its potential influence on the length and treatment of a story. Attention was also given to the rehearsal of dialogue within stories, which led to a consideration of the importance of repetition and expansion as powerfully generative storytelling tools.

Turning to the sharing of material between stories, the few instances of shared characters and motifs in Brian's storytelling were examined, as was the occurrence of the same episodic run in two separate stories. Since such sharing of material is the exception rather than the rule in Brian's recorded stories, the examples discussed led to a consideration of Brian's use of stock material and its implications for his storytelling ethos. The relative rarity of shared material and the almost complete lack of long runs suggested that the appearance of the same material in more than one story was more likely to reflect the story as Brian originally heard it rather than the borrowing of material from one story to another by the storyteller. The substitution of stock phrases and stock characters for one another was also discussed; again while such phenomena are not typical of Brian's storytelling, it was seen that such instances do show that Brian is capable of using stock material in an unexpected context and that this may indicate that he was exposed to such sharing of material by other storytellers in the past.

The next major area of consideration was that of self-correction and the clarification of details by the storyteller. Here instances in which Brian corrected himself while telling a story or otherwise clarified parts of a story were discussed with a view towards better understanding the storyteller's attitude towards, and conception of, the stories. It was concluded that the correction of mistakes by the storyteller clearly implied that he believed there was a correct form to a story and a correct way in which to tell it. It was also seen that such correction was most likely to occur when the mistake represented a violation of the logic of the story which would otherwise affect the story's outcome. A consideration of Brian's clarification of details



strengthened a growing impression that he has background knowledge of the characters and their relationships to one another and to the story. This in turn led to speculation that Brian relates to the story as one who has witnessed a real event.

Moving to a consideration of Brian's use of language, the stories were again compared to one another in order to discover patterns of usage. The different types of set language which Brian uses were defined and discussed, and examples of each type were examined. Type 1 and Type 2 set language were explained as being typical of traditional idiom from the common stock of Gaelic storytelling, the main difference between them being an artificial one constructed for the purpose of examining Brian Stewart's stories: Type 1 set language appears in more than one of his stories, while Type 2 set language appears only in versions of the same story. Since set language is more frequently associated with a particular story rather than being used randomly throughout the stories, this was seen as evidence that language use is dictated at least in part by the story itself rather than being a matter of personal choice, and that such language use suggests that Brian tries to tell the stories as he originally heard them. Here examples of formulae specific to Brian's family were also discussed, and it was suggested that Brian's conservative use of traditional language may reflect the use of such language by other storytelling members of his immediate family. Type 3 language was described as language which is not immediately identifiable as being formulaic, but which nevertheless occurs in highly similar form from one telling to another. As this kind of similar language occurs very frequently in Brian's storytelling and may comprise large sections of stories, the possibility was raised that in the absence of historical formulae and set language, our storyteller's language tends to become fixed in set shapes or patterns. Finally, the frequency of the different types of set language was assessed, and it was seen that the use of set language Types 1 and 2 differed markedly from story to story. The implication of this finding was that the type of language used appears to depend on the story itself, which again pointed to a conservative use of language and an effort on Brian's part to tell stories as he once heard them.

### **Conclusions**

The consideration of variation and similarity between story versions at the levels of episodic structure, content, and language use, repeatedly indicated that Brian's storytelling ethos is a conservative one. The individual story versions were seen to be highly similar to one another, not only in terms of form and content, but also in terms of the language with which the storyteller tells them. One of the most striking



features which emerged was the restriction of the use of specific material -- stock incidents, motifs, formulaic and even ordinary language -- to particular stories. While the small amount of sharing of material between stories which occurred was not unexpected, the restriction of such material to specific story contexts was much more frequent and implied conservatism and the re-telling of stories as they were once heard, rather than the freer use of stock material which may have been more widespread in the storytelling past or in other storytelling traditions. The impression of fidelity to a correct form of the story was further strengthened by Brian's clarification of details of individual stories, as well as the pains he took to correct mistakes while telling stories.

The weight of evidence therefore points to the conclusion that Brian's storytelling ethos is retentive and reproductive, rather than generative or creative, as evidenced in his generally stable stories which exhibit highly similar form, content and language from story version to story version. He does not wish to re-create the stories, but rather to re-tell them. Although variations do occur between story versions, Brian's aim in storytelling is to tell stories as he once heard them. Seen in this light, our discussion of how Brian uses conscious rehearsal and repetition, traditional devices of storytelling such as compression and expansion of detail, and even story structure and the logic of the story itself to remember the stories takes on new meaning. The storyteller needs all of these devices because he is trying to stay true to his *idea* of the story as he heard it. Similarly, his individual story versions may differ from each other in terms of minor details -- or, on rare occasions, larger details -- but if we understand that the storyteller is trying to re-tell the stories as he once heard them, his highly similar yet non-identical stories make sense. While the story versions are not always the same, they *are* the same for our storyteller. Thus the stories are not memorised word for word, but they are remembered; the story versions are not identical to one another, but they are very similar and very often include the same language. Our investigation has been as much concerned with the storyteller's beliefs about storytelling as with the evidence supplied by the stories themselves; and the evidence from both these areas of enquiry points to the conclusion that the guiding principle in Brian Stewart's storytelling is that he is trying to tell his stories *mar a chuala e* -- as he heard them.

## CONCLUSION

### **THESIS SUMMARY AND OVERALL CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this thesis has been to try to understand and elucidate the way in which Brian Stewart remembers and tells stories and in so doing to clarify what might be termed his storytelling ethos. The methods used in the study have been the direct questioning of the storyteller about his relationship to storytelling, as well as a detailed comparative analysis of the stories themselves. As such, this thesis has been as much concerned with the storyteller's own beliefs about storytelling as with the evidence supplied by the stories themselves.

After an introduction and first chapter which presented the aims and scope of the thesis and discussed the different strands of scholarly thinking which have influenced and contributed to the present study, the thesis moved on to the detailed consideration of our storyteller. Chapter Two concentrated on Brian Stewart's life history, providing a general outline of his life story with particular attention given to his childhood memories of the travelling life. Chapter Three then turned to a detailed consideration of Brian's knowledge and experience of storytelling and storytelling practices, and his own comments on how he learned and remembered stories in his youth and on how his memory works. Here Brian's own comments made it clear that from an early age he made a concerted effort to learn his grandmother Siùsie's stories, repeating the stories back to her and being corrected until, in his own words, he "got it right." This has important implications for the way in which Brian and his grandmother -- and perhaps other members of the Stewart family -- understood the stories and the way in which they should be transmitted from one generation to another. Brian's comments also made it clear that interest in the stories, repeated hearing of them, and the practice of consciously reviewing or rehearsing the stories were all important factors in his formation as a storyteller and in his ability to remember and tell the stories. Also significant were his comments on the use of set formulaic language: although some of the phrases are no longer meaningful to him, he still uses them in his stories, implying a strong commitment to telling the stories as he first heard them.

Moving from direct questioning of the storytelling to an analysis of the stories themselves, Chapter Four considered 39 separate recordings of nine of Brian's stories in a detailed comparison of story versions which was carried out at the levels of episodic structure, content, and language use. While the study here concentrated on

variation or similarities between story versions and thus represented a story-based analysis, the storyteller's own comments and storytelling behaviour were again taken into account: the comments made by Brian in the course of telling the stories were considered as important evidence about the way in which he remembers and tells the stories. The discussion covered a wide range of topics, from the reasons behind variation in story structure or content to the way in which story structure and traditional features such as repetition help Brian to remember the stories in a particular form. Here the true area of enquiry was the interface between story and storyteller: the comparison of the stories was not only important for what it could say about the stories themselves, but also for what it could say about the storyteller and his storytelling ethos. Again and again, through the levels of structure, content and language, it was seen that the separately recorded story versions displayed a high degree of similarity to one another; this similarity, coupled with Brian's comments and behaviour, made it clear that Brian's storytelling was informed by his desire to tell the stories in the "right" way, as he heard them.

Considered together, the conclusions of both Chapters Three and Four complement one another and make a strong case for the idea that Brian Stewart's guiding principle in storytelling is to try to tell the stories in the form which he understands to be correct, as he remembers hearing them. The title of this thesis -- *Mar a Chuala Mi* ("As I Heard It"), a phrase which Brian has used to describe his storytelling -- therefore reflects not only Brian's attempt to tell the stories as he remembers them, but also refers to the larger issue of the complex interaction between individual memory and collectively known stories which has been at the heart of the storytelling dynamic for storytellers in every generation.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

While a doctoral thesis is by definition limited and must leave many questions untouched, my work with Brian Stewart has suggested a number of areas of inquiry for future investigation which would build on or complement the present study. It is my hope that both I and others will be able to follow up this thesis by pursuing some of these possibilities.

Future possibilities can be divided into a few broad areas. First, the comparisons made between individual story versions in the present work suggest that even more detailed comparisons between different versions of the same story could be very informative. While the analysis in the current work has by necessity been relatively

broad -- examining, as it did, 39 separate story versions of nine different stories -- more in-depth comparisons of the different versions of only one story could repay further study. Here the question of language use is of particular interest, and a study which would more precisely compare and define the types of language used in versions of the same story -- as well as in different stories told by the same storyteller -- would be very useful. Such work could be done with Brian's stories as well as material from other storytellers.

Another obvious continuation of the work begun in this thesis would be the further study of stories from members of Brian's immediate family, especially his Uncle Ailidh Dall, his first cousin Mary Stewart, and his second cousin Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord. Together with Brian, these four storytellers represent four close relatives from the same family tradition, and the comparison of their stories to one another would be of great interest. I have already made limited use of this material as part of my discussion of Brian's stories, and have found it to be of great use in answering questions about how Brian may have first heard the stories as well as providing very valuable evidence about his use of language. Further study of this material could investigate the similarities between the stories as told by the different family members, which could lead to important conclusions about the storytelling ethos of the Stewarts in the recent past. While I have speculated that Brian's conservative use of language and his attempt to tell stories as he once heard them may be indicative of the storytelling ethos of his immediate family, it is impossible to say with certainty whether or not this is the case without further study of the archived recordings. It is also worth noting that younger members of Brian's extended family might be able to provide further evidence about storytelling practices as they remember them. Several members of the related Stewart and Williamson families who are of the generation below Brian have had significant exposure to storytelling, and might be able to supply important information on this topic. A team approach might be taken to such a project, with several researchers working together to collect new material and to work on the already collected recordings.

Related to such inquiry would be further study of the social history of the Stewart family, much of which has not yet been collected. Younger family members could again be important in such a study, as could many of the older inhabitants of Sutherland who have memories of the travellers from earlier in this century. Just as one man, Brian Stewart, has provided a wealth of information and social history, so



too must there be many others of his generation who have much to impart about the recent past.

In addition to studying the recordings of Stewart family members in relation to each other, there are also valuable studies of individual tradition bearers waiting to be done. In particular, the 33 stories recorded from Ailidh Dall preserve the artistry of a master storyteller. With his nephew Brian Stewart's main stories now transcribed and discussed in the current work, a study of Ailidh Dall's stories would be even more interesting and relevant to current scholarship. So too would a study of his daughter Mary Stewart: although there are only six recordings of her in the School of Scottish Studies Sound Archive, her relationship to Ailidh Dall, Siùsie Stewart, and Brian Stewart makes her a potentially fascinating subject of study, and she was also a very good storyteller in her own right. Finally, a study of Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord and his stories would be a very important contribution to storytelling scholarship. He recorded 62 stories or anecdotes for the School of Scottish Studies in the 1950s, and from the recordings I have heard he appears to have been another master storyteller who remains virtually unstudied. His relationship to Brian, Ailidh Dall and Mary Stewart again makes his stories even more attractive as a subject for further study. Again, a team approach might be taken to any or all of these possibilities.

One last area of further study would be the detailed exploration of the relationship between the stories in Brian's repertoire and the broader oral and manuscript traditions. Although I have given some brief consideration to the history of some of the stories in Chapter Four -- for example, the discussion of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn*' and its relationship to the larger oral tradition -- which has proved interesting and useful, the present study has not allowed for a full-fledged investigation of the way in which the stories fit into the broader Gaelic narrative tradition. Just as the discussion of the Stewart family versions of *Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn*' cast light on the possible form of the story as it was found in Scotland in the past, so too could the consideration of other stories make useful contributions to the study of Gaelic narrative, especially in the Scottish context. Of particular interest to the present writer would be an examination of the collected Scottish Gaelic versions of the *Còcaire* story (AT 300) and an improved understanding of its relationship with the *Bodach Baigeir* frame story (AT 303), both as collected in Scotland and in Ireland. Also of interest is the very rare *Maraiche Màirneal* story (related to AT 433B), as well as the *Ladhar* story, which again has been collected only rarely in Scotland. The Stewart

family versions of this last story show some strong similarities to the versions collected from the brothers Duncan and Neil MacDonald of South Uist, and more investigation into the relationship between these versions might yield significant results.

Clearly, there are many possibilities for further enquiry, and it is to be hoped that some of these avenues will be pursued in order to make accessible to future generations the rich oral heritage preserved by the Stewart family.

## **APPENDICES**

My principal aim in preparing these transcriptions has been to produce an accurate and useful written representation of the stories as Brian Stewart tells them. As such, I have not tried to standardise Brian's speech, but instead have tried to represent the stories as they have been recorded through literal and faithful transcriptions which convey the flavour of Brian's Gaelic as he speaks it.<sup>1</sup> While the transcriptions should not pose any great difficulties for readers of Gaelic, a few points may be noted here.

### *Use of Apostrophes*

To avoid ambiguity, apostrophes are used to indicate that a letter or letters have been omitted. For example, the dropping of the final syllable in a word is represented by the word written without the final syllable but with an apostrophe at the end, in order to indicate that the spelling is intentional and not a typographical error. Thus *duine* ("man") with dropped final syllable is represented as *duin'*, *chuala* ("heard") as *chual'*, and so on. Apostrophes are also used to represent dropped internal consonants, e.g. *a'ad* and *a'd* for *agad* ("at you"). The apostrophe is used also to indicate a possessive pronoun, e.g. *'bhràthair* to mean "his brother" when the possessive is not clearly stated but lenition makes it clear that it is operating in the sentence; this last use of the apostrophe is intended to improve clarity. One slightly unusual practice is the use of the apostrophe before lenited /sh/ in the phrase *ann a' shin*; although this is unconventional, it was decided that the apostrophe should be used in this context for the sake of a consistent orthographic policy (i.e., apostrophes indicate omitted letters). Other uses of the apostrophe throughout the transcriptions are self-explanatory and do not represent a departure from the orthographic practices to be found elsewhere (e.g. *Tocher* and similar publications).

### *The Emphatic Suffix*

Also worth noting is the emphatic suffix *-(e)as*, as in *dhomh-as* ("to me"), which is very common in Brian's Gaelic. In order not to violate the "slender with slender, broad with broad" rule of Gaelic spelling, the *-eas* ending has been used following slenderised consonants, which has resulted in spellings such as *bhithinn-eas* ("I would be"), *air-eas* ("on him"), *rith'-eas* ("to her"), *aic'-eas* ("at her") and so on. Forms such as *agad-as* ("at you") are also frequent. It is hoped that the reader will quickly grow accustomed to these spellings.

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<sup>1</sup>For some discussion of the value of literal transcriptions for studying "oral storytelling styles" see Halpert and Widdowson 1986, especially 42-46.



### ***Accents***

As for accents, I have used the grave throughout, as suggested in the Scottish Examination Board's 1981 document "Gaelic Orthographic Conventions," except in the case of short open /a/ for which I retain the acute [á] in order to avoid ambiguity.

### ***Variant Spellings and Unusual Words***

Certain spellings, such as *gheobh* for *gheibh* ("will get") or *folbh* for *falbh* ("to leave, leaving") represent the Sutherland Stewarts' pronunciation and should not be too unconventional for the reader. For any form which is not listed in *Dwelly's Illustrated Gaelic to English Dictionary* (Dwelly 1988), I have provided an explanation in a footnote.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, unusual words have been glossed in footnotes. When an unusual word or phrase occurs in more than one recording of a story, I have glossed the word in the transcription of the earliest recording in which it appears. Thus the earliest transcription of each tale usually has more notes than the later ones. Similarly, any notes on the title of the story or the names of characters are to be found in the earliest transcription of each tale.

### ***Notation***

I have made use of commas, dashes and other punctuation to represent pauses, false starts and other hesitations as they occur. Three dots within square brackets [...] represents an unintelligible word or phrase. A word within square brackets represents a transcription which I feel is probably correct but which is not certain. Swallowed sounds at the end of words are also supplied in square brackets, but only rarely. Square brackets with nothing inside them [] represent a small sound which is probably a hesitation or false start, and which in any case is almost certainly insignificant.

### ***Acknowledgement***

Finally, a word of thanks to those who have been so helpful in the preparation of these transcriptions. I have benefitted considerably from the patient help of many people who were willing to listen to the recordings with me and help decipher what I termed the "mystery gaps". While I have mentioned them in the "Acknowledgements" section at the beginning of this thesis, it seems appropriate to thank them here again, especially Mrs. Peggy McClements, Dr. John MacInnes, Mrs. Caitriona MacKinnon, Dr. Kevin Hind and

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<sup>2</sup>Dorian 1978 is particularly useful in regard to Brian's Gaelic. See especially her list of oblique forms used as nominatives and positives, 169-171. Her discussions of the imperative in East Sutherland Gaelic (120-121) and of the possessive pronouns and related constructions (97-99) are also especially useful. Considering the Sutherland Stewarts' Perthshire roots, Ó Murchú's 1989 *East Perthshire Gaelic* is also relevant, although I have not found it to be as useful as Dorian's work in regard to Brian Stewart's language.

Professor William Gillies. It was particularly helpful to be able to consult the transcriptions which Peggy McClements made previously of many of the earlier recordings. While I am indebted to those named (and several others) for their generous help, final responsibility for any errors to be found in the transcriptions of course rests with me.

**APPENDIX A**  
**TALE TYPES AND RELATED BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Introduction**

The following notes are intended to provide basic background information for the nine main stories discussed in the body of this thesis. Each story is listed separately in alphabetical order. For each story, information about the tale type is provided, as well as information about the existing recordings of the story which have been made in Scotland. Recordings of Brian Stewart are listed first, followed by a list of recordings from other Stewart family members. This is followed by a list of other sound recordings of the tale made in Scotland, as well as written versions collected by the School of Scottish Studies. This list includes versions in Gaelic, English and Scots. Recordings marked with an asterix [\*] were made by the author and are to be found on the audio cassettes accompanying this thesis. Other recordings are marked "SA" to denote the School of Scottish Studies Sound Archive, or "LS" to denote the Linguistic Survey of Scotland (see the subsection on "Sources" in the section entitled "Methodology" at the beginning of this thesis for more detailed information on the numbering systems used for the recordings). Following the information about recordings, a list of printed Scottish versions of the tale is provided, followed by a list of unpublished items related to the tale. Finally, a list of motifs included in each story is provided; motif numbers come from Thompson 1955-58.

In the absence of a Scottish "Types of the Folktale," it is difficult to provide an official total number of known collected versions of any individual tale, particularly for the most popular ones. However, as such figures are useful to those researching the tales, I have provided totals -- based only on my own research -- which I hope will be helpful. While these figures cannot be definitive, they should be of use to others, especially in giving an indication of the distribution of each tale. My research has been based on the information in the indices and archives of the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh, and on information from other index-type sources such as John MacKechnie's catalogue of Gaelic manuscripts (1973) and the Romantic Tales Bibliography in Bruford 1969, as well as other citations found in printed sources. Where I have found references to items in the unpublished John F. Campbell of Islay manuscripts, I have checked the manuscripts and listed the items when appropriate. I have also checked all the printed versions of stories listed here. The totals listed thus

represent the total number of versions which I have been able to find in a limited amount of time; I hope they will be of value to others.<sup>1</sup>

In calculating totals, multiple recordings or transcriptions of a story from the same storyteller have been counted as *one* version collected in Scotland. Stories which are listed in the School of Scottish Studies Folktale Archive under "cf." for a particular Aarne-Thompson number have not been included in the totals, but figures for these tales have been included in a footnote where significant.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the notes. Full references for published works are to be found in the list of works cited at the end of the present work.

JFC	John Francis Campbell of Islay
LS	Linguistic Survey of Scotland
MWHT	John G. McKay, 1940 and 1960. <u>More West Highland Tales</u> . 2 vols.
NLS	National Library of Scotland
PTWH	John Francis Campbell, 1890-3. <u>Popular Tales of the West Highlands</u> . 4 vols.
SA	Sound Archive of the School of Scottish Studies.
W&S	<u>Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition, Argyllshire Series</u> . 5 vols. <u>W&amp;S volumes cited are as follows:</u>
W&S 2	D. MacInnes, 1890. <u>Folk and Hero Tales</u> .
W&S 3	J. MacDougall, 1891. <u>Folk and Hero Tales</u> .
W&S 4	J.G. Campbell, 1891. <u>The Fians</u> .

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<sup>1</sup>Tale type information from the School of Scottish Studies should be available via the Internet in the near future. I also understand that a catalogue of the JFC manuscripts in the NLS is being prepared and will be available on-line when it is finished.

## AM BODACH BAIGEIR

("THE OLD BEGGAR")

**Tale Type:** AT 303, "The Twins or Blood-Brothers".

Number of versions: 19.

**Notes:** AT 303 is often associated with AT 300 (which corresponds to Brian's "*Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*"), and eight versions of the linked stories have been collected in Scotland; see the discussion of the relationship between AT 300 and AT 303 as Brian has them in the section on "Further Implications of Logical Links" in Chapter Four. For a general discussion of the relationship between the two tale types, see Stith Thompson 1946: 24-32, and for a discussion of Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord's version see Bruford and MacDonald 1994: 451-452.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Four.

SA 1974/32/B1; LS Tape 954; LS Tape 956; \*24 September 1993.

The 1993 recording combines *Am Bodach Baigeir* with *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* (AT 300).

**Recordings from other family members:** Two.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1957/41/A2 & B1. This version combines AT 300 and AT 303.

- **Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord:** SA 1955/131/B4. This version combines AT 300 and AT 303.

### **Other Recordings**

The Folktale Archive of the School of Scottish Studies documents 8 more recorded versions of AT 303. They are:

1. SA 1960/239/A1 - from Peggy Mackinnon, Barra.
2. SA 1968/61/A1 - from A.J. MacPhail, N. Uist.
3. SA 1963/8/A4 - from Angus John MacPhail, N. Uist. This story combines AT 300 + 303.
4. SA 1954/92/B13 continued on SA 1954/93/A1 - from Andrew Stewart, Aberdeen.
5. SA 1955/151/A7, B17, B18 - from Bella Higgins, Blairgowrie.
6. SA 1955/24-25 - from Willie MacPhee, Blairgowrie.
7. SA 1973/161/1 and SA 1976/06/B3&A1 - from Betsy Whyte, Montrose.
8. SA 1976/85/B2 - 86/A1 - from Duncan Williamson, Cupar.



### **Printed Scottish tales related to AT 303**

1. "*A' Mhaighdean Mhara*" ("The Sea-Maiden"), PTWH 1: 72-104. Collected from John MacKenzie of Kenmore, near Inverary by Hector Urquhart, 1850. This story incorporates AT 300 as an in-tale.
2. "*Mic a' Mhuilleir Lònanaich*" ("The Sons of the Lonan Miller"), MWHT 2: 302-315. Collected from John Crawford of Arrochar by John Dewar c. 1860.
3. "*Cailleach na Riobaig*" ("The Hag of the Hair"), MWHT 2: 378-383. Collected from Donald MacKillop, Berneray by Hector MacLean, 1859.
4. "The Red Etin" in Buchan 1908 [1829]: 13-17.
5. "The Red Etin" in Chambers 1870 [1826]: 89-94. Narrator unknown. The story is described as "from Mr Buchan's curious manuscript collection" (94) which was made between 1827 and 1830. Cf. especially pgs. 94-95 for notes on possible earlier versions. Reprinted in Philip 1995: 23-27.

### **Manuscript Versions**

Three other collected versions of this story are unpublished and summarised in English in the JFC manuscript collection in the National Library of Scotland. They are:

1. NLS Adv. MS. 50.2.2 (JFC Vol. XVI): ff. 42-51. "*Iain Beag Mac an Iasgair*" ("Little John, Son of the Fisherman"). Collected 1870 by Campbell from Malcolm MacDonald (probably from Mull), who learned the story "from a smith from the north." The story combines AT 303 and 300.
2. NLS Adv. MS. 50.2.2 (JFC Vol. XVI): ff. 99-104. "Ian of the Salmon". Collected 1870 in Mull from a MacLean who had many stories. The story combines AT 303 and 300.
3. NLS Adv. MS. 50.2.2 (JFC Vol. XVI): ff. 158-61. "*Iain an t-Iasgair*" ("John the Fisherman"). Collected 1870 from Donachadh Moristan of Mull, who learned the story from his father, also from Mull. This is a short summary of a story which combines elements of AT 303 and 300. Campbell says that the storyteller could not read or write, but he remembered a copy of a printed book in his father's house which contained Fenian stories.

**Motifs include:** Z210 Brothers as heroes. T685.1 Twin adventurers. M341.2.19 Prophecy: death at hands of certain person. E761 Life token. Object (animal, person) has mystic connection with the life of a person, so that changes in the life token indicates changes in the person, usually disaster or death. G200 Witch. D55.1 Person becomes magically larger. G263 Witch injures, enchants or transforms. E761.4 Life token: object darkens or rusts. H1385.8 Quest for lost brother. F577.2 Brothers identical in appearance. K1311.1 Husband's twin brother mistaken by woman for her husband. T351 Sword of chastity. B311 Congenital helpful animal. Born at same time as master and (usually) by same magic means. D2074.2.1

Hound, hawk, otter or other creature summoned by thinking of it or wishing for it. G275  
Witch defeated. E50 Resuscitation by magic. D700 Disenchantment. D1645.4 Incandescent  
sword. N342.3 Jealous and overhasty man kills his rescuing twin brother. H57 Recognition  
by missing member. M370 Vain attempt to escape fulfilment of prophecy.

## STÒIRIDH A' CHAIMBEULAICH

("CAMPBELL'S STORY")

**Tale Type:** Adventure tale, somewhat related to AT 880 and 884A.

Number of versions: 2.

**Notes:** Ailidh Dall's version of this story is fuller than Brian's and contains an additional opening episode which links it to AT 890. Brian has on occasion said that he does not have the story in its entirety, so Ailidh Dall's fuller version is not unexpected. In addition to the two versions from Brian and Ailidh Dall, one collected story related to AT 890 is similar to Ailidh Dall's version, and another collected story contains an incident which is similar to an incident in the Stewart versions; see notes below.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Four.

SA1974/33/A2; LS Tape 1003; \*24 September 1993; \*2 July 1994.

**Recordings from other family members:** One.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1957/43/B4 & 44/A1; cf. AT 890.

### **Printed Scottish Tales Related to Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich**

1. "*Ursgeul*" ("The Chest"), PTWH 2: 9-23. Collected from Catherine Milloy of Cowal by Hector MacLean, 1859. This story exhibits similarities to Ailidh Dall's version and to AT 890 but is not very similar to Brian's version.

2. "*An Nighean agus na Mèirlich*" ("The Girl and the Robbers"), MWHT 2: 184-189. Collected from a poor woman by D. Torrie in 1860. This story contains the incident of the woman disguised as a man and falsely accused of sexually assaulting another woman, but exhibits no other similarities to Brian's story.

**Motifs include:** R10 Abduction. T320.1 Woman escapes from would-be seducer. K1837 Disguise of woman in man's clothes. K2111 False accusation. H1578.1 Test: whether man or maiden. T210 Faithfulness in marriage. K1815 Humble disguise. T96 Lovers reunite after many adventures. R152. Wife rescues husband. R152.1 Woman escapes with her husband.

**STÒIRIDH A' CHÒCAIRE**  
(**"THE STORY OF THE COOK"**)

**Tale Type:** AT 300, "The Dragon-Slayer".

Number of versions: 21.<sup>2</sup>

**Notes:** AT 300 is often associated with AT 303 (which corresponds to Brian's "*Am Bodach Baigeir*"); see the notes to "*Am Bodach Baigeir*" above. Of the printed versions listed below, none seems directly related to the Stewarts' "*Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*"; however, they all share in common the giant/dragon-slaying incident which links them, and the Stewart version, to AT 300.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Four.

LS Tape 965; SA 1974/27/B3 & 28/A1; \*24 September 1993; \*18 September 1995.

**Recordings from other family members:** Two.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1957/41/A2 & B1. This version combines AT 300 and AT 303.

- **Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord:** SA 1955/131/B4. This version combines AT 300 and AT 303. A translation of this recording appears in Bruford and MacDonald 1994: 129-138 as "The Story of the Cook".

**Other Recordings**

The Folktale Archive of the School of Scottish Studies documents 10 more recordings of stories related to AT 300. They are:

1. IFC Ms. 1027: 23-36, collected 2.7.46 by C.I. Maclean from Peggy Maclean, Raasay.
2. IFC Ms., collected 2.8.47 by C.I. Maclean from Angus MacMillan, Benbecula.
3. IFC Ms., collected 5.12.49 by C.I. Maclean from Patrick MacCormick, Benbecula.
4. SA 1954/52/B2 - from William Macdonald, Arisaig.
5. SA 1968/63/B1 - from Peter Morrison, N. Uist.
6. SA 1969/106/A1 & B1 - from Donald Alasdair Johnson, S. Uist. This has been recorded from the same storyteller on six more occasions: SA 1971/49/b & 1971/50/A; SA 1972/130/A & B1; SA 1972/130/A & B1; SA 1974/54 - 55/A1; SA 1975/228/A4; SA 1976/160/A.
7. SA 1976/161/B2 - 1976/162/A1 - from D.J. Stewart, S. Uist.
8. SA 1954/90/A - from Jeannie Robertson, Aberdeen.

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<sup>2</sup>These 21 versions include mixtures of AT 300 with other AT tale types; an additional 9 versions in the Folktale Archive indices of the School of Scottish Studies are marked "cf. AT 300". Considering the popularity of AT 300, it is likely that more Scottish versions of the story could be found.

9. SA 1954/90/A6 - from Isaac Higgins, Aberdeen.

10. SA 1962/68/B3 - from Jock Higgins, Aberdeen.

Cf. the section on *Am Bodach Baigeir* (AT 303) above for some stories which combine AT 303 and 300.

### **Printed Scottish tales related to AT 300**

1. "The Widow's Son and the King's Daughter" in Buchan 1908 [1829]: 55-58. Reprinted in Philip 1995: 42-46.

2. "*A' Mhaighdean Mhara*" ("The Sea-Maiden") in PTWH 1: 72-104. Collected from John MacKenzie of Kenmore, near Inverary by Hector Urquhart, 1850. This story incorporates AT 300 as an in-tale in AT 303.

3. Campbell summarises five more versions of AT 300 in PTWH 1: 95-104. These come from South Uist, Argyllshire, Berneray and Barra.

4. "*Lod, Mac an Aoirein*" ("Lod, the Farmer's Son") in W&S 2: 278-305. Collected in 1881 or 1882 from Archibald MacTavish, an Oban shoemaker originally from Mull, who heard the tale in his youth from another Mull man.

5. "*Sgeul air Mac Fear an Earraidh Uaine Ri Gaisge*" ("The Knight of the Green Vesture") in W&S 3: 222-247. Collected from Alexander Cameron of Ardnamurchan by J. MacDougall, between summer 1889 and spring 1890. Cameron heard the story from his grandfather, and from others in his boyhood.

6. "*Aiseirigh Cadail Lachuinn*" ("Lauchie's Dream") in *Cape Breton Magazine* 23 (1979). Collected from Lauchie MacLellan, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia by John Shaw.

7. "*Iain Mac an Iasgair Mhòir*" ("Iain, the Big Fisherman's Son") in *Cape Breton Magazine* 16 & 17 (1977). Collected from Joe Neil MacNeil of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia in 1976 by John Shaw.

8. "*Gille Mòr an Tuathanaich*" ("The Farmer's Big Lad") in MacNeil 1987: 342-357. Collected from Joe Neil MacNeil of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia between 1976 and 1980 by John Shaw.

**Motifs include:** N825.3 Old woman helper. H331 Suitor contest: bride offered as prize. H335.4 Suitor task: to defeat enemies. T68.1 Princess offered as prize to rescuer. R111.1.3 Rescue of princess (maiden) from dragon (from giants in Brian's story). F531.2 Size of giant. R111.1.4 Rescue of princess from giant. H105.1 Dragon-tongue proof. Dragon slayer cuts out the tongues and uses them later to prove his identity as slayer. H105.1.1 False dragon-head proof. Impostor cuts off dragon heads (after tongues have been removed) and attempts to use them as proof of slaying the dragon. K1932 Impostors claim reward (prize) earned by hero. H326 Suitor test: skill. H331.12 Suitor contest: splitting block of wood.



H331.14 Suitor contest: trial of strength. H80 Identification by tokens. H94.4 Identification by ring dropped in glass of wine. Q262 Impostor punished. Q414.1.1 Boiling in tar as punishment for impostor.

**STÒIRIDH AN EICH DHUIBH**  
(**"THE STORY OF THE BLACK HORSE"**)

**Tale Type:** Heroic; cf. AT 531.

Number of versions: 6.

**Notes:** *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh* is somewhat related to AT 531, but differs in many ways from the tale as described by Stith Thompson. I have not come across Scottish versions of the tale in Scots or English.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Five.

SA 1974/26/A1; LS Tape 954; LS Tape 1006; \*15 April 1993; \*30 October 1993.

A Gaelic transcription and English translation of Brian's 1974 recording appear in *Tocher* 29 (1978): 270-279.

**Recordings from other family members:** One.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1957/39/B2.

**Printed Scottish Gaelic tales related to *Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh***

1. "*An Long a Chaidh do dh'America*" ("The Ship that Went to America") in W&S 2: 160-205. Collected in 1881 or 1882 from Archibald MacTavish (cf. pg. 213 above). Reprinted in Philip 1995: 125-136.
2. "*Sgeulachd na Làire Bhig*" ("The story of the Little Mare") in *Gairm* 67 (Summer 1969): 216-219. Collected from Donald MacNeil of Barra in 1944 by M. Bruce Watson. There are some interesting similarities to Brian's version.

**Manuscript Versions**

The two other collected versions of this story are both unpublished and in archives. They are:

1. NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.11 (JFC Vol. XI): fol. 450-459. "*An t-Each Dubh*" ("The Black Horse") collected by Hector MacLean from Roderick MacNeil of Mingulay 27 September 1860; MacNeil learned the story from Roderick Gillies of Barra. The story is listed as number 353 on Campbell's Gaelic list of stories in PTWH 4; and in MacKechnie 1973 Vol. 1: 19, column 1, no. 100. This tale is related to the five other tales listed here, and is particularly similar to the Cape Breton version listed below.
2. "*An t-Each Dubh*" ("The Black Horse"), Manuscript MG6/24 in the Beaton Institute of University College of Cape Breton, Sydney, Nova Scotia. The story was collected in Cape Breton sometime before 1911 from an unknown storyteller by James MacNeil of Irish Vale,

Cape Breton County. While this tale is most similar to the Mingulay version, there are also clear similarities to the Mull and Barra versions cited above; there is also some relation to the Stewart version of the story. Cf. MacNeil 1987: 449 n. 88.<sup>3</sup>

**Motifs include:** P282 Stepmother. B184.1 Magic horse. B211.1.3 Speaking Horse. T11.4.1.1 Love through sight of hair of unknown princess. D1273 Magic formula: be-spelling a person to undertake a task under pain of disaster. H901 Tasks imposed on pain of death. Z85 Formulistic runs. B401 Helpful Horse. H982 Animal(s) help man perform task. B184.1.6 Flight on magic horse. H933 Princess sets hero tasks. H1151.2 Task: stealing horse out of stall. H1347 Quest for comb. D791 Disenchantment possible under unique conditions. D700 Person disenchanted. E607.1 Bones of dead collected and buried. D131 Transformation: man or woman to horse or filly. B313 Helpful animal an enchanted person.

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<sup>3</sup>I would like to thank Dr. John Shaw for allowing me to see his photocopy of this manuscript.

**GILLE NAN COCHULLA CRAICINN**  
(**"THE LAD OF THE SKIN COVERINGS"**)

**Tale Type:** Native hero tale, related to the "*Cèadach*" story complex.

Number of versions: 17.

**Notes:** A popular Fenian tale with possible literary origins. See Bruford's study of the story (1969: 123-128, 258) for a good discussion of the tale and its characteristics in various parts of Scotland and Ireland, and cf. pgs. 117 ff. in Chapter Four above. See also Sean O' Sullivan 1966: 262-263 for some notes on the forms of the tale in Ireland.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Five.

SA 1958/72&73; LS Tape 956; \*16 April 1993; 24 September 1993; \*2 July 1994.

**Recordings from other family members:** Four.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1955/73/B15; SA 1958/75/B2 & 1958/76/A1.
- **Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord:** SA 1955/124/A2.
- **Mary Stewart:** SA 1957/48/A4 & B7.

**Other Recordings**

The Folktale Archive of the School of Scottish Studies documents three more recordings related to the "*Cèadach*" story. They are:

1. SA 1955/153/B16 - from Bella Higgins, Blairgowrie; story discussed in English.
2. SA 1965/17/A1 - from Neil Gillies, Barra; a March 1952 version from him is also contained in School of Scottish Studies Notebook LXXX.1: 1-8.
3. SA 1966/51/A1 - from Peter Stewart, Lewis.

**Printed Scottish tales related to the *Cèadach* story**

1. "The Romance of Gille na Cochlan Crackenach" in *Folk-Lore Journal* Vol. VI (1888): 173-178. Collected from Mrs. Young of Lairg, Sutherland, by a local schoolmaster in 1859 for Charlotte L. H. Dempster, who sent the story to Campbell of Islay. This is no. 73 on Campbell's English list in PTWH 4, and is to be found in NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.13, (JFC Vol. XIII): ff. 65b-72 under the name "*Fach Mòr Mac Rìgh na Lirriach*"; a fair copy of the story is to be found in NLS Adv. MS. 50.3.1: ff. 45-49. This version is at times strikingly similar to Brian's version, both in content and form.
2. "*Gille nan Cochall Craiceann*," in Craig 1955: 7-25. Collected from Angus Campbell, Roseneath, c. 1860, by John Dewar. This is no. 216 on John F. Campbell of Islay's Gaelic story list in PTWH 4, from NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.11 (JFC Vol. XI).

3. "*Gille nan Cochla-Craicinn*" ("The Lad of the Skin Coverings") in W&S 3: 27-55. Collected from Alexander Cameron of Ardnamurchan by J. MacDougall, between summer 1889 and spring 1890. Cameron learned his stories from Donald McPhie and old men whom he knew in his boyhood.
4. "*Gille nan Cochulla Craicionn*" ("The Lad with the Skin Coverings, or Ceudach, Son of the king of the Colla Men") in W&S 4: 260-274. Collected by J.G. Campbell in the second half of the nineteenth century; the narrator is not listed.
5. "*Fionn Mac Chumail 's an Gille Crom, Glas*" ("Feunn Mac Cuail and the Bent Grey Lad") in W&S 2: 32-67. Collected in 1881 or 1882 from Archibald MacTavish (cf. pg. 213 above).
6. "*Leòmhann Cridheach, Mac Rìgh Eirinn, agus Ceudamh, Mac Rìgh nan Cola*" ("Leoän Creeach, Son of the King of Eirin, and Kaytav, Son of the King of the Cola") in W&S 2: 376-383). Received by D. MacInnes from Neil Livingstone of Oban sometime prior to publication in 1890. The story is related to the *Cèadach* complex, but is not much related to the Stewart version of the story.
7. "*Ceudach Mac Rìgh nan Collach*" ("Ceudach Son of the king of the Colla Men") in W&S 4: 225-232. Collected by J.G. Campbell in the second half of the nineteenth century; the narrator is not listed.
8. "*Rìgh na Gréige*" ("The King of Greece") in *Gairm* 15 (1956): 243-248, and in *Sgeulachdan à Albainn Nuaidh* (Glasgow: Gairm, 1969), 94-101. Recorded from Neil MacIntyre of Benacadie Pond, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia by C.I.N. MacLeod.

For some printed tales which bear only a slight resemblance to the Stewart versions and to the *Cèadach* story as described by Bruford (1969:123-128), but which may be useful to those interested in the story and its historical development, see: MacNeil 1987: 47-57; MWHT 2: 68-76; and MacDonell and Shaw 1981: 53-68.

### **Manuscript Items**

There are two unpublished items related to this story in the JFC manuscript collection. They are:

1. NLS Adv. MS. 50.2.2 (JFC Vol. XVI): ff. 106-108. "*Sgeulach air a' Ghille Chrom Ghlas, Mac Rìgh nan Collach*" ("The Story of the Bent Grey Lad, Son of the King of the Colla Men"), collected 1870 from a MacLean (a male) in Mull; this same storyteller gave a version of AT 300 + 303 (cf. notes on manuscript versions in the *Am Bodach Baigeir* section above). This is an English summary of a tale related to the "*Cèadach*" story complex.
2. NLS Adv. MS. 50.2.2 (JFC Vol. XVI): fol. 141. Collected 1870 from Uilleam Robertson, a weaver in Tobermory, Mull who learned his stories in Uist which he left 20 years



previously. This is a one-page summary of a tale related to the "*Cèadach*" story. N.B. MacKechnie (1973) has this listed as fol. 186, but the item he lists is actually the one here described from fol. 141.

**Motifs include:** K1886.2 Mists which lead astray. D2011 Years thought to be days. L111.3 Widow's son as hero (only in 1973 version). H1211 Quests assigned in order to get rid of hero. D1472.1.14 Magic cup supplies drink (only in 1958 version). D114.1.1 Transformation: man to deer. D565.2 Transformation by touching with wand or rod. D771.4 Disenchantment by using wand. F122 Journey to Land of Giants. F134 Otherworld on island. H1010 Impossible tasks. H1161.2.2 Task: killing fierce bull; B184.1.5 Breath of magic horse blows off or sucks in those he pursues. D1005 Magic breath. D615 Transformation combat. Z140.1 Colour of flag (sails) on ship as message of good or bad news. H901.1 Heads placed on stakes for failure in performance of task. Q421.1 Heads on stakes. Q112 Half of kingdom as reward.

**STÒIRIDH LADHAIR**  
("THE STORY OF LADHAR")

**Tale Type:** Native hero tale.

Number of versions: 7.

**Notes:** Brian and Ailidh Dall's versions are similar to the other collected versions, but the South Uist versions and the tale printed in MWHT (see below) have noticeably more in common with each other than with the Stewart versions. All the versions share some similarities to the "*Tuairisgeul Mòr*" story and have the "*Rìdire gan Ghàire*" ("Knight without Laughter") motif, but these similarities do not appear to be significant.<sup>4</sup>

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Four.

SA 1974/32/A4; LS Tape 1006; \*14 May 1994; \*1 April 1995.

Dr. John Shaw also recorded a fragment of the story from Brian on 24 February 1993.

**Recordings from other family members:** Three.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1957/36/1 & 37/1; SA 1957/42/B2.

The story is entitled "*Rìgh Òg na Frainge*" ("The Young King of France").

- **Mary Stewart:** LS Tape 964 (November, 1973).

Brian Stewart also participates in this recording.

**Other Collected Versions**

The Folktale Archive of the School of Scottish Studies documents three more collected stories related to *Stòiridh Ladhair*. They are:

1. D.J. MacDonald Ms. 14: 1250-1300 - collected in 1954 from Duncan MacDonald of Peninerine, South Uist by Donald John MacDonald.
2. D.J. MacDonald Ms. 27: 2493-2553 - collected in 1954 from Neil MacDonald of Peninerine, South Uist by Donald John MacDonald.
3. D.J. MacDonald Ms. 67: 6278-6322 - "taken from an old manuscript" by Donald John MacDonald; narrator not listed.

**Note:** All three versions are entitled "*Iain Og, Mac Rìgh na Frainge*" ("Young John, the Son of the King of France") and are very similar to one another. The first two are from the storytelling brothers Duncan and Neil MacDonald, who both heard the tale from their father. A detailed comparison of the tale as told by these two brothers would be most interesting.

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<sup>4</sup>For some discussion of the "*Tuairisgeul Mòr*" story see Bruford 1969: 158-9 and 163 note 4; and for the "Knight without Laughter" motif see Bruford 1969: 151-2 and 155 note 14.

### **Printed Versions**

"*Iain Og, Mac Rìgh na Frainge*" ("Young John, the Son of the King of France") in MWHT 1: 228-277. Collected from Roderick MacNeil of Barra by Hector MacLean, probably in July 1859; from NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.10 (JFC Vol. X); ff. 168-193.

**Motifs include:** H942 Task assigned as payment of gambling loss. D1273 Magic formula: be-spelling a person to undertake a task under pain of disaster. Z85 Formulistic runs. H1378.2 Quest for king's joy and woe (= quest for "*fìos feagal an aon sgeul*" ?). K864 Fatal apple-throwing game. F771.4.1 Castle inhabited by ogres (by giants in Brian's story). F628.2.7 Strong man uses man as weapon. D2061.1.1 Person magically reduced to ashes or dust.

## STÒIRIDH LOIRCEIN

("LOIRCEAN'S STORY")

**Tale Type:** Hero tale, related to AT 301 and the native Gaelic romance "*Eachtra Iollainn Airmidheirg*"; cf. AT 550 & 551.

Number of versions: 13.

**Notes:** Alan Bruford describes this tale as one of the most popular in oral tradition and explains that "all versions [of *Eachtra Iollainn Airmidheirg*] are liable to be confused with the international *märchen*, AT 301, from which its central episode is drawn" (1969: 84). See his discussion of the story (1969: 72, 84-93, 259) for details of the possible development and origins of the story.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Four.

SA 1974/27/A-B1; 24 February 1993;<sup>5</sup> \*1 July 1994;<sup>6</sup> \*31 March 1995.

**Recordings from other family members:** Two.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1957/38/B3 continued onto SA 1957/39/A1.

The story is entitled "*A' Rìgh Shaoghail*" ("The King of the World").

- **Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord:** SA 1955/129/B11 continued onto SA 1955/130/A1.

### Other Collected Versions

The Folktale Archive of the School of Scottish Studies documents four more collected tales related to "*Eachtra Iollainn Airmidheirg*" and/or AT 301. They are:

1. D.J. MacDonald Ms. 12: 1080 - from Duncan MacDonald, S. Uist, 1954.
2. D.J. MacDonald Ms. 44: 4091 - from Mary Ann MacInnes, S. Uist, 1955. There is another version from Mary MacInnes in D.J. MacDonald Ms. 66: 6216, but the notes to this ms. are unclear and it is possible the story is not from M. MacInnes but from an unnamed narrator.
3. A version collected by C.I. Maclean on 20.8.50 from Angus MacMillan, Benbecula.
4. A version collected by C.I. Maclean on 5.11.49 for the IFC from Duncan MacDonald, S. Uist.

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<sup>5</sup>This recording was made by Dr. John Shaw.

<sup>6</sup>This recording is a full conversation *about* the story rather than an actual telling; it is however included in the transcriptions and used for comparative purposes. See the explanatory note preceding the transcription for more details.

**Printed Scottish Gaelic tales related to *Eachtra Iollainn Airm dheirg* and/or AT 301**

"*Sgeulachd air Nigheanan Rìgh Lochlainn*" ("The King of Lochlin's Three Daughters"), in PTWH 1: 244-258. Collected from Neil Gillies of Inverary by Hector Urquhart in 1859.

2. "*Ridire na Sgiatha Deirge*" ("The Knight of the Red Shield"), in PTWH 2: 451-483. Collected in 1860 from John McGilvray of Colonsay, who learned it from his father, a native of Mull. Campbell summarises several more versions; cf. pages 483-93.

3. "*Ridire Ghrianaig*" ("The Rider of Grianaig, and Iain the Soldier's Son"), in PTWH 3: 9-45. Collected from Donald M'Niven, Islay by Hector MacLean in 1859.

4. "*Iain Dubh Mòr mac Rìgh na Sorcha*" ("Big Black John, Son of the King of Sorcha"), in MacDougall and Calder 1910: 40-55. Narrator not listed; collected by James MacDougall.

5. "*Na Trì Saighdearan*" ("The Three Soldiers"), in MWHT 2: 190-212; and see notes, 212-214. Collected from Kenneth MacKenzie, Glasgow who learned it from Alexander MacNicol of Skye, by Hector Urquhart in 1859.

**Manuscript Versions:**

1. There is an unpublished story entitled "*Loircean na Luaith*" ("Loircean of the Ashes") in the JFC manuscript collection, NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.9. The story was collected from a traveller named John MacDonald in Inverary, Argyllshire in 1859 by Hector Urquhart. (This same John MacDonald also recited "Sheen Billy," a story related to Brian's *Am Maraiche Màirneal*; cf. notes to *Am Maraiche Màirneal* below).<sup>7</sup> The story is no. 68 in J.F. Campbell's Gaelic List in PTWH 4; see PTWH 2: 485-486 for Campbell's partial summary of the tale.<sup>8</sup> The story bears close resemblances to Brian's version and a detailed comparison of the two stories would be extremely interesting. This item is listed in Mackechnie 1973 Vol. 1: 9, column 2, no. 24.

**Motifs include:** H1324. Quest for miraculous remedy. F122 Journey to Land of Giants. F80 Journey to lower world. F771.4.1 Castles inhabited by ogres (by giants in Brian's story). Z85 Formulistic runs. F628.2.7 Strong man uses man as weapon. Z311 Achilles heel (vulnerability in one spot). K1935 Impostors steal rescued princess. K677 Hero tests the rope on which he is to be pulled to upper world. K963 Rope cut and victim dropped. K1931.2 Impostors abandon hero in lower world. K1932 Impostors claim reward earned by hero. H1242 Youngest brother alone succeeds on tasks. Q262 Impostor punished.

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<sup>7</sup>Other items from this same reciter are to be found in NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.3: fol.1; NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.10: ff. 270; and NLS Adv. MS. 50.1.11: fol. 264.

<sup>8</sup>Campbell erroneously states here that the story was collected by Hector Urquhart; however, the manuscript itself is preceded by a note written and signed by Hector *MacLean*.



AM MARAICHE MÀIRNEAL  
("THE SEAWORTHY MARINER")

**Tale Type:** Hero tale; cf. AT 433B, "King Lindorm".

Number of versions: six.

**Notes:** This tale is somewhat related to AT 433B, but differs in many ways from the story as described by Stith Thompson. See Neat's comments, 1996: 180-181, where he discusses the relationship between "*Am Maraiche Màirnealach*" and Breton tales, and on the same topic cf. Le Menn 1985. Also see the note following the story in *Tocher* 29 (1978) which states that the tale seems only to be known to the Sutherland and Ross-shire Stewarts (pg. 291), and Gowans 1992: 47-48 for some notes on the history of the story.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Four.

SA 1974/26/B1; \*14 April 1993; \*31 March 1995; \*18 September 1995.

A Gaelic transcription and English translation of Brian's 1974 recording appear in *Tocher* 29 (1978): 280-291. Reprinted (English only) in Philip 1995: 173-179.

**Recordings from other family members:** Four.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1955/74/B2; SA 1955/75/A1, continued onto SA 1955/78/A1 (English summary); SA 1958/73/B2.

A re-telling of the story in English by Hamish Henderson as he remembers hearing it from Ailidh Dall appears in Neat 1996: 77-85.

- **Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord:** SA 1955/130/A3.

**Other Recordings**

The Folktale Archive of the School of Scottish Studies documents recordings related to the *Maraiche Màirneal* story from two other informants. They are:

1. "*Lèine a chaidh 'na Nathair*" ("The Shirt which turned into a Snake"), SA 1955/79/A1 and SA 1955/79/A4 (the second recording is faulty) from Rachel(?) Stewart, Blairgowrie.

The School of Scottish Studies notes indicate that the narrator's first name is uncertain; she was a Gaelic traveller originally from Sutherland, and was born a Stewart. The story is related to Brian's version.

2. "The Henwife," SA 1955/146/B1 from James Lindsay MacPhee, Perthshire. Story told in English. Mr. MacPhee was a traveller born in Perthshire. He heard the tale from his grandmother, who told it in both Gaelic and English. His story is related to Brian's version.

### **Other Known Versions**

The earliest documented version was told to J.F. Campbell c. 1859 by an Argyllshire traveller named John MacDonald (also the narrator of "*Loircean na Luaith*," see notes to *Stòiridh Loircein* above). The story is partially summarised by Campbell in PTWH 1: lxxxix-xc, and is clearly related to Brian's version (cf. also no. 299 on Campbell's English list of stories, PTWH 4). The hero's name is "Sheen Billy"; according to Linda Gowans, this is a variant of *Sior Bhoilidh*, a Gaelic form of Sir Gawain's name. See Gowans 1992: 47-48.

**Motifs include:** S31 Cruel stepmother. S31.2 Children enchanted by stepmother. D191 The Prince as Serpent. T15 Love at first sight. Q451.9 Punishment: woman's breasts cut off. K2117 Calumniated wife. K2112 Woman slandered as adulteress. K1815 Humble disguise. D1500.1.18 Magic healing water. D1171.6 Magic cup. D2120 Magic Transportation. D1275.1 Magic music. Q414 Punishment: burning alive.

**STÒIRIDH OISEAN AS DÈIDH NA FÈINN'**  
(**"THE STORY OF OSSIAN AFTER THE FENIANS"**)

**Tale Type:** Native hero tale.

Number of versions: 16.

**Notes:** While stories about Oisean in the oral tradition are relatively well documented, the tale as Brian has it is unusual in that it details the arrival of Oisean's wife in the form of a bird as well as her giving Oisean a life-prolonging ring. For more discussion of the structure and history of the story, see the sections on "Omission of Logical Links" and "Further Implications of Logical Links" in Chapter Four. See also discussions of the story in Bruford 1987: 48-52; Bruford and MacDonald 1994: 454-455; Shaw 1998 (forthcoming); and Béaloideas 54-5: 48-56 for a comparison of Scottish and Irish versions.

**Recordings from Brian Stewart:** Five.

SA 1958/72; LS Tape 965; LS Tape 1111; \*14 April 1993; \*18 September 1995.

A Gaelic transcription and English translation of Brian's 1973 recording appear in *Tocher* 29 (1978): 292-301; the text of the English translation is reprinted in Bruford and MacDonald 1994: 171-176.

**Recordings from other family members:** Four.

- **Ailidh Dall:** SA 1955/74/A2; SA 1958/73/A11.

- **Mary Stewart:** SA 1957/48/B8.

- **Aleck Williamson, Easter Ross:** SA 1968/259/B5.

**Other recordings**

The Folktale Archive of the School of Scottish Studies documents recorded versions of stories related to Oisean from six informants. They are:

1. SA 1954/43/A6 & 44/1 - from Donald MacDonald, Arisaig.
2. SA 1959/58/B1 - from Peggy MacDonald, S. Uist .
3. SA 1960/70/A2 - from Donald Sinclair, Tiree .
4. SA 1963/13/B20 - from Angus MacLellan, S. Uist.
5. SA 1976/191/B5 - from Roderick Macpherson, Barra.
6. SA 1980/32/B1, 1984/110/A1, SA 1971/4/A3 - from Angus MacLellan, N. Uist.

**Printed Scottish Gaelic tales related to Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn':**

1. A summarised version of the story contained in a c. 1803 Mull manuscript is reprinted in J.F. Campbell 1872, Volume I: 38-39. The manuscript was originally written for MacDonald

of Staffa and is now among the JFC manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland (cf. NLS Adv. MS. 73.2.1).

2. "Osean after the Feen," PTWH 2: 113-117. Collected from Barra (narrator not listed).

Following the story Campbell also notes versions from Inverary, Sutherland and Argyll; cf. 117-120.

3. "Ossian After the Fians," W&S 4: 82-84. J.G. Campbell gives only an English summary of the story; narrator not listed.

### **Manuscript Items**

Two items of possible interest are to be found in Campbell's manuscript collection. They are:

1. NLS Adv. MS. 50.2.2 (JFC Vol. XVI): ff. 137-139. An English summary of "Ossian after the Feinn" collected from Uilleam Robertson, a weaver from Tobermory, Mull in 1870; cf. manuscript item 2 under *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*".

2. NLS Adv. Ms. 50.2.2. (JFC Vol. XVI): fol. 147. This is a reference to the story from Donachadh Moriston of Mull, but the story is not written out in full.

**Motifs include:** C441 Tabu: mentioning original form of transformed person. D732 Loathly lady. D1860 Magic beautification. F302 Fairy mistress. C31.2 Tabu: mentioning origin of supernatural wife. C31.9 Tabu: revealing secrets of supernatural wife. D1076 Magic ring. F122 Journey to land of giants.

**APPENDIX B**  
**TRANSCRIPTIONS**

The following section contains transcriptions of the 39 stories discussed in Chapter Four. For notes on spelling and transcription, see the section entitled "Principles of Transcription and Orthography" at the beginning of the Appendices.



## AM BODACH BAIGEIR

**Date: 1974**

**Collector: Donald Archie MacDonald**

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1974/32/B1**

Uill, 'se mar a thuirt mi bh'ann roimhe cuideachd, eh ... a' rìgh 's a' bhàn-rìgh, 's bha dà ghille ac'. Agus, eh, bha aid, na gillean, bha aid 'cluich, 'cluicheach mach. Thàinig eh, bodach baigeir, char e an àird gu taigh a' rìgh 's. Fhuair aid, thug iad dha rudeigin co-dhiubh dh'itheadh e.

'S dar bha e 'folbh thuirt e riuth', 'S brèagha a' dà ghille tha sin."

"O, tha," [chaidh a ghràdh] ris, "tha aid, eh, balaich brèagha a th'annta 's, tha iad glè mheasail air a chèil'."

"O," thuirt es', "ged a tha iad measail air a chèil', marbhaidh a' darn' fear dhiubh 'fear eil' fhathast."

'S dh'fholbh a' bodach baigeir.

Agus sin, dar a dh'fhàs na gillean, dar a thàinig iad gu aois, thuirt an darna fear dhiubh ris an fhear eil', "Bheil cuimhn' a'ad dè thuirt am bodach baigeir bha siod?"

"O tha," thuirt 'm fear eil' dhiubh, 'bràthair eil'. "Ach cò bheireadh feairt air a' bhodach bhaigeir?"

"Uill," thuirt e ri 'bhràthair, "mus tachair sin, tha mis' 'folbh. Agus," thuirt e, "tha mi 'fàgail thus'," thuirt e, " 's tha mis' 'dol a dh'fholbh," thuirt e. "Sin," thuirt e, "cha mharbh sinn a chèil'."

Agus. [*One can hear the sound of a match being struck here. Then B.S. begins to smoke as he speaks again:*] Uill, thàinig iad sin, char a bhràthair mach cuide ris gus a' gheat, 's bha an geat a bh'air, rathad an àird gu 'chaisteal, 'se *pillar* chlach a bh'ann. Agus thug e 'bhois, thug e buill' air a' *phillar*, 's dh'fhàg e làrach a làimh a's a', a's a' gheat, *pillar* a' gheat.

"Nis," thuirt e ri 'bhràthair, "fhad 's bhios sin geal, bidh mis' beò, ach dar a chì thu dearg e, bios fhios a'ad gum bi mis' marbh."

Dh'fholbh e sin 's, bha a' sin a bhràthair air oighreachd 'athar 's, fhuair es' àit' dha fhèin co-dhiubh 's phòs e 's, bha bean aig'.<sup>1</sup> Agus, an oidhch' seo char iad laighe. Cha robh iad fad' 'sa leabaidh dar a chuala e fuaim 's thuirt e ris a' bhean,

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<sup>1</sup>This is the point at which, when *Am Bodach Baigeir* is used as a frame story for *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire*, the events of the latter story are introduced: the first brother travels to another land where he fights giants in order to win a wife, and on their wedding night the thread of the *Am Bodach Baigeir* story is again taken up. Here, however, the central events of *Stòiridh a' Chòcaire* remain untold and we simply learn that the first brother makes his home elsewhere and marries. For a discussion of the relationship

"Uist!" thuirt es', "dè tha sin?"

"Och!" thuirt a' bhean ris, "chan eil ach seannach tha ag iarraidh 'ruagadh.'"

"O uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

'S dh'èirich e mach á 'leabaidh, 's as dèidh an t-seannaich a thug e. 'S dar a' b'fiosal air-eas b'àird air a' t-seannach 's dar a' b'àird air-eas b'fiosal air an t-seannach, gus do ruig e taighean caol, fad', dubh. 'S char e staigh 's, agus, eh, dar a char e a-staigh, cha robh, bheothaich e sin 'n tein' 's bha e 'dèanamh biadh dha fhèin 's bha, eh, an cù aig' 's an t-each aig' 's a' seòbhag aig' cuide ris. Agus an fheadhainn, rug iad an aon oidhch' ri chèil'. Agus, sin troimhn oidhch', *spell* dhen oidhch', thàinig gnog gus a' dorus.

Thuirt e, "Cò tha sin?"

"O chan eil ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i null air beinn, 's bios i nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

"O ma tha," thuirt an gille ri', "cha bhi thu a-nochd ann, a chaillich."

"Hud, hud," thuirt i, "nach leig thu staigh creutair de bhoireannach?"

Agus eh. Ach dh'fhosgail e sin 'dorus 's thug e staigh i. 'Se cailleach a bh'ann, boireannach a bh'ann.

"O," thuirt i, "mus tig mi a-staigh, eh, ceangail do chuid beothaichean."

"O cha bhean na beo--"

"O ceangail thusa na beothaichean."

"O chan eil dad agam a cheanglas [aid]."

"Seo," thuirt i, "dhut. Shin a'ad pìos de ròp dhut 's ceangail, ceangail le sin aid."<sup>2</sup>

Cheangail e sin na beothaichean.

Thàinig a', thàinig sin a' chailleach staigh 's. Bha iad sin 'bruidhinn ri chèil', agus dar bha iad 'bruidhinn, bha e 'toirt sùil oirr' 's.

"Dhia, a chaillich," thuirt e, "tha thu 'fàs mòr."

"O," thuirt i ris, "m'iteagan 's m'òiteagan tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

Ach thuirt e sin -- bha e 'toir sùil oirr' 's bha a' chailleach 'fàs mòr, 's bha i 'fàs mòr.

"Dhia, tha thu 'fàs mòr, a chaillich."

"Tha, bios fhios agad air sin," thuirt i.

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between these two stories, see the section entitled "Further Implications of Logical Links" in Chapter Four.

<sup>2</sup>Usually when Brian tells this story, the hag gives the hero a piece of her own *hair* (*ròineag*) rather than a piece of rope with which to tie the animals. This is also the case in Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord's recording of the story (SA 1955/131/B4). This detail is in fact common in the international tale type AT 303; Stith Thompson's 1946 summary of the tale includes the following passage: "He [the hero] comes to a house in which lives an old woman who is a witch. She pretends to be afraid of his dogs and bids him to lay one of her hairs on it so that the dog will be quiet and not harm her. The young man performs her bidding. The hair transforms itself into a chain. She now approaches and strikes him with a rod and turns him to stone" (1946: 26). In Brian's versions of the story, there is no mention of the hair turning into a chain or of the hero being turned to stone.

Leum a' chailleach air. Bha e fhèin 's a' chailleach nis 'sabaid. Ach leag a' chailleach e gu ghlùinean e.

Agus dar rinn i seo thug es' glaoth, "Cà' beil mo chù, 's m'each 's mo sheòbhag, a rugadh an aon oidhch' rium fhèin?"

"Haaa," thuirt i ris, "chan eil sin agad. Teannaich a riob 's na leig a' fad."<sup>3</sup>

'S theannaich an teadhair air amhaich nam beothaichean 's, thachd iad. 'S chuir i às dhan a' bhalach. Mharbh i e.

Agus nis, bha a-nis a bhràthair bha air ais aig an oighreachd 'athar, bha e 'dol na h-uile madainn a shealltainn air a' *phillar* aig a' gheat. 'S dar char e a' latha seo, chunnaic e gu' robh e dearg. 'S thàinig e sin air ais, thuirt e ri 'mhàthair, "O," thuirt e, "tha mo bhràthair marbh. Agus, eh, feumaidh mis' a dhol," thuirt e, "gu' faic mi dè dh'èirich dha."

Dh'fholbh e sin 's rinn e air àit' a bhràthar. Nis, bha an dà ghill', bha iad glè, glè cholach ri chèil', chan [aithnichte] a' darna fear às a' fear eil', fear eil'-- an darna fear às an fhear eil' dhiubh. Agus, eh, dar a thàinig e staigh, leum a' bhean air 's chuir i 'làmhnan mun cuairt air.

"O [giall],"<sup>4</sup> thuirt i, "cà' an tàinig thu-- Cà' a' deach thu raoir?" [...]

"Och," thuirt e, "cha robh mi fad' air folbh."

Thuirt i, "Ruith a' seannach bha sin."

Agus, bha e sin 'n oidhch' cuide rith-s' agus, eh, thàinig sin tìde dhol a laigh'. Chaidh iad sin laigh'. 'S bha aig'-eas-- char es' a laigh' cuide ri bean a bhràthar. Ach dar a char e laigh', tharruing e an claidheamh aig' a-staigh eatorra. Agus, eh, cha robh iad fad' a's a' leabaidh dar a thàinig, dh'fhairich e fuaim 's thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Dè tha sin?"

"Och," thuirt i, "chan e sin ach a' seannach a-nochd a-rithistich. Seannach tha ag iarraidh 'ruagadh 's."

"O ma tha e ag iarraidh 'ruagadh riamh, gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

Agus bha 'chù 's each 's seòbhag aig-eas cuideachd, cuide ris. As dèidh a' seannaich a ghobh e. 'S ghobh e, far a' b'ìosal air-eas b'àird air a' seannach, 's far a' b'àird air an t-seannach b'ìosal air-eas, gus do ruig e an taigh a's a' robh a bhràthair. Char e sin staigh 's, o cha robh [one] a-staigh. Agus, eh, thug e sin a chuid bheothaichean a-staigh 's, thug e dhaibh rud 's, cha robh e fad' ann a' sin dar a chual' e guth aig an dorus.

"Cò tha sin?"

"O chan eil ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch', bios i null air beinn, 's bios i nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

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<sup>3</sup>Here the idea is that the hag addresses the piece of hair with which the animals are tied, commanding it to tighten on their necks. In an interview of 19 July 1997, Brian explained the phrase *Teannaich a riob 's na leig a' fad* as follows: "You see that they would tighten, and -- on their necks, and choke them. Don't let them their length, you know." Thus an appropriate translation would be "Tighten, hair, and do not let them their length", i.e., do not let them go.

<sup>4</sup>Probably an interjection, more usually occurring as *ghiall* but here unlenited.

"O ma tha," thuirt es', "cha bhì thu a-nochd ann,"  
 "Och, hud, na dèan sin. Leig a-staigh mi."  
 Agus, eh, "Och uill, ma tha," thuirt e, "thig a-staigh ma tha."  
 "O tha feagal orm [gus do rinn -- a lei-- a leithid sin ...] ris na, ris na beathaichean agad -- beothaichean a'ad, 'cù a'ad. Ceangail aid."  
 "O chan eil dad agam a cheangaileas iad."  
 Agus, eh, "Seo agad e, nis, shin a'ad ròp dhut."  
 Cha robh ach ròp ach glè, eh -- "Och!" thuirt e, "chan e seo, chan eil a' ròp--"  
 "O, ceanglaidh sin, 'Rìgh *George* ged a bhiodh e bho làn shiùil."<sup>5</sup>  
 "Dhia," thuirt e ris fhèin, "chan eil thu dona a chaillich ma nì thu an tobh' sin."  
 Thilg e, eh, an tobh' a's an tein' co-dhiubh, 's dar thug e -- thilg e a' ròp a's a' tein' agus cheangail e le rud a bh'aig' fhèin iad. 'S dar thilg e a' rud a's an tein' rinn e urchair chianail.<sup>6</sup>  
 Thàinig i sin staigh 's, dìreach mar a rinn i 'n oidhch' roimhne sin. Bha iad 'cnacaireachd 's bha 'chailleach 'fàs mòr. Bha i a' fàs mòr.  
 "Dhia, a chaillich," thuirt e, "tha thu 'fàs mòr."  
 "Och chan eil ach m'iteagan 's m'òiteagan," thuirt i, "tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."  
 Ach, eh. "Tha thu 'fàs mòr," thuirt e.  
 "O," thuirt i, "bios fhios agad air sin."  
 Leum a' sin a' chailleach air 's. Bha i fhèin 's e fhèin nis 'sabaid troimhn a' taigh ann a' sin. Ach mar rinn i air a bhràthair chuir i es' gu 'ghlùinean cuideachd.  
 'S thug es' glaodh, "Cà' beil mo chù 's m'each 's mo sheòbhag a rugadh an aon oidhch' rium fhèin?"  
 "Haaa!" thuirt i, "chan eil sin agad. Teannaich a riob 's na leig a' fad."  
 "Chan eil sin agad-as, 'chaillich," thuirt es'.  
 Leum a' sin na beo'-- thàinig an t-each aig' 's an cù aig' 's, leum aid air a' chailleach. 'S mharbh aid i. Agus, eh, dh'fhoighnich e ann a' shin dhith, mus do chuir e gu bàs i, cà' do-- dè rinn i ri 'bràthair. O, dh'innis e dhith (*sic*) gu' robh e, na cnàimhean aig' ann a' sìod. 'S mharbh e sin a' chailleach. Char e sin gu 'bhràthair 's fhuair e 'bhràthair, an dusd<sup>7</sup> aig a' bhràthair 's, chuir e rudan ris 's chuir e, eh, eh, an caman iochdar 's slacan draoidheachd 's an

<sup>5</sup>Here the hag is saying that the rope/hair which she gives the hero would be strong enough to hold the ship the "King George" under full sail. Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord uses a similar phrase in his recording of this story, saying " 'S *cheangaileadh i River George ged bhiodh e fo làn shiùil*" perhaps a mis-transcription for *Rìgh George* (School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1955/131/B4). In a note to Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord's version as printed in *Scottish Traditional Tales*, Alan Bruford and Donald Archie MacDonald suggest that "River George" is a corruption of "Royal George," "a man-of-war from Nelson's navy" (1994: 452).

<sup>6</sup>Note the similarity to that which happens in *Am Maraiche Màirneal* when the enchanted shirt/snake is thrown into the fire. Both the ideas expressed and the language used are similar.

<sup>7</sup>Gaelicisation: "dust".

claidheamh gach solus, 's thug e beò a bhràthair. Agus bha iad sin 'cnacaireachd ann a' sin, 's thòisich iad 'g inns' dha chèil' mar a thachair. Bha a bhràthair ag inns' dha 's.

Thuir e a' sin -- a' fear a mharbh a' chailleach an toiseach -- "Càit a' robh thu raoir?" thuir e.

"O, 'se bha mis' 'nam laigh' cuide ris a' bhean agad."

"Huh! Bha thu, robh thu --?"

"Bha. Bha mi 'nam laigh' cuide ris a' bhean a'ad a' raoir."

"O mhic a' fear ud!" thuir es'. Thog e a' chladheamh aig', 's mharbh es' a bhràthair eil'. 'S chaidh e sin dhachaidh. Dh'fhàg e sin e. Dh'fhàg es' a bhràthair ud.

Agus dar thàinig e dhachaidh gus an taigh aig' fhèin, "O, glèidh Dia mi," thuir a' bhean aig' ris, "dè an obair th'ort? Dh'fholbh thu raoir," thuir i, " 's dh'fholbh thu an oidhch' roimhne, an oidhche roimhne sin, as dèidh a' bheothach bha sin."

Ach thàinig e sin staigh, 's thàinig a' tìd' dhol laigh', 's char iad laigh'. Ach thuir a' bhean aig' ris, "Gu dè a bh'ort a' raoir? thuir i.

"Dè a bh'orm a' raoir?"

"Uill," thuir i, "dar char sinn laigh', tharruing thu an claidheamh staigh eadar riut-as agus mi fhèin."

"Do rinn mi sin?" thuir e.

"Rinn thu sin," thuir i.

"O ma tha," thuir es', "cha chaidil mi nochd ann nas muth'."

'S às a thug e rithistich. Agus char e sin air ais gus -- far do mharbh e a bhràthair. 'S rinn es' an dearbh rud air a bhràthair. Fhuair es' a' slacan draoidheachd, an caman iochdar 's a' slacan draoidheachd 's an claidheamh gach solus. 'S thug es' a-nis beò a bhràthair eil'. Thàinig e fhèin 's [] bràthair air ais gus an taigh ac'. 'S dar chunnaic a' bhean aid, "O glèidh Dia m'anam!" thuir i, "Gu dè tha seo? Cò a' duin' agam? Chan eil fhios agam cò, cò a' duin' agam," thuir i.

Bha iad 'na' seasamh a' sin, "Uill, feuch dèan thu fhèin mach cò a' duine a th'ann."

"Cha dèan," thuir i, "mi mach," thuir i. "Chan eil fhios agam cò th'ann." Agus. "Ach," thuir i, an ath rud, "cuiribh mach na làmhnan," agus dar a chuir iad an sin a-mach na làmhnan ac', bha 'duin' aic' fhèin, bha, bha bàrr aon de na, lùdag bheag dheth. Agus.

"O," thuir i, "seo a' duin' agam. Ach," thuir i, "mur b'e," thuir i, "gu bheil bàrr na lùdag dheth, cha dèanainn-eas mach cò bh'ann. Agus 'se seo is coireach," thuir i, "gu -- 'se thus' bha, bha 'nad laighe," thuir i, "an dè. 'Se thus' bha a' seo a' raoir."

"Uill," thuir e, " 'se. Mis' bha a' seo raoir."

Agus, uill, shin agad nis ceann na stòiridh, ach bha 'bodach baigeir ceart, mharbh 'n darna fear 'fear eil' dhiubh. [B.S. *laughs*.] Shin a'ad sin 'ceann aig a' stòiridh.



## AM BODACH BAIGEIR

**Date:** May 1974

**Collector:** David Clement

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 954**

**D.C.:** *Culrain, in May, 1974. Sin agaibh e.*

**B.S.:** *I'll speak in English first. Well, this story composed of, eh, an Irish king and queen, who had two sons. And one day a tramp man came by and he called at the king's castle. And, he was done well to. And he looked at the two sons, and he says to the, em, queen, he says, "You have two nice sons," he says, "but, one day, the one'll kill the other." So, now, I'm going to tell it to you in Gaelic.*

**D.C.:** *Yes.*

*[Tape is paused. Resumes with:]*

**B.S.:** Rìgh òg na h-Eireann agus a' Bhàn-rìgh, bha dithis mic ac'. 'S aon lath' thàinig bodach baigeir seachad, 's char e an àird gus a' chaisteal 's, fhuair e rud ri ith' ann 's, char dèanamh dheth.<sup>1</sup> 'S dar bha e sin 'folbh, thug e sùil 's, thuirt e ris a' bhàn-rìgh, "Tha dà mac brèagha agad ann a' sin," thuirt e rith'.

"O tha," thuirt a' bhàn-rìgh.

"O tha," thuirt es', "ach, uh" -- am bodach baigeir -- "ach, uh, marbhaidh 'n darna fear am fear eil' diubh fhathastaich."

Nis, dh'fholbh a' bodach baigeir 's. Bha a' dà ghiollan, bha iad 'cluicheach mach air a' chnoc. 'S thuirt an darn' fear ris an fhear eil' diubh, "Do chual' tu dè thuirt a' bodach baigeir?"

"O chual'," thuirt a bhràthair.

Ach, uill, char a-nis bliadhnachan seachad 's -- agus dh'fhàs na giollanan 'na' balaich. Agus aon de na balaich, thuirt e ri 'bhràthair, "Uill," thuirt e ri 'bhràthair, "tha mis' 'dol a dh'fholbh," thuirt e, " 's 'dol a dh'fhàgail oighreachd m'athar, gus a' breugaich mis' a' bodach baigeir."

Och, nis, bha a bhràthair brònach air a shon airson bhith 'ga fhàgail agus, ghobh e sin 'bheannachd le 'bhràthair 's le 'athair 's le 'mhàthair. 'S dar a char e mach air a' gheat' aig 'athair -- bha geat' agus bha, eh, *pillar* dhe chlach ann. Thog e 'bhois, 's thug e sgailc air a', air a' *phillar* chlach.

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<sup>1</sup>B.S. uses the phrase *char dèanamh dheth* here and in similar contexts to mean "he was done well to" i.e., "he was treated well". B.S. also uses similar phrasing in English, as can be seen in his comments immediately preceding the story (above).

"Nis," thuirt e ri 'bhràthair, "cho fad' 's a bhios sin geal, bidh mis' beò. Ach dar a bhios e dearg, bidh mis' marbh."

"Uill, uill," thuirt a bhràthair.

Dh'fholbh e sin 's, och chaidh sin bliadhnaichean seachad. 'S bha a' bràthair 'tighinn h-uile madainn 's bha e 'toirt sùil air a' chlach 's. O bha 'bhois -- làrach a' bhois -- geal. Ach, aon madainn thàinig e mach, 's thug e sùil 's, chunnaic e, eh, làrach a' bhois dearg. O char e staigh gu 'athair, 's thuirt e ris, "O," thuirt e, "tha mo bhràthair marbh."

"Ciamar tha fios agad?" thuirt 'athair ris.

"O uill," thuirt e, "tha 'bhois sìod dearg, làrach a' bhois dearg. 'S tha mis' 'dol a dh'fholbh," thuirt e "gus a' faic mi dè dh'èirich dha."

Thog a' sin a bhràthair air 's, bha e [...] ach fhuair e mach càit' a' robh 'bhràthair. Agus dar fhuair, thàinig e gus an àit' a bha seo, gu oighreachd eil'. Agus, eh, eh, 'se gus a' bhean aig a bhràthair a thàinig e. 'S dar chunnaic a' bhean e, shaoil leath' gur e an duin' aice-fhèin a bh'ann.

"'S Dhia glèidh mi," thuirt i, "cà' deach thu a' raoir?" thuirt i.

"Och," thuirt es', "cà' deach mi ach far am bi mi 'dol na h-uile h-oidhch'."

Ach thàinig sin an oidhch' 's, char iad laigh'. Cha do ghobh e guth air fhèin nach e 'bhràthair a bh'ann. Agus dar char e 'laigh', thug e an claidheamh aig' air an truaill, 's chuir e eadar e fhèin agus a' bhean, a bhràthair, e. Agus cha robh aid fad' 'na' laighe, dar a thàinig fuaime 's thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Dè tha sin?" thuirt es'.

"O chan eil," thuirt is', "ach seannach tha ag iarraidh 'ruagadh'."

"Uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh," thuirt e riutha (*sic*), "gheobh e 'ruagadh nochd'."

Agus, eh, as dèidh a' seannach a thug e. Agus, eh, dar chaidh e as dèidh 'seannach, far a' b'ìosal air-eas b'àird air a' t-seannach, 's far a' b'àird air-eas b'ìosal air an t-seannach, gus do ruig e taighean fad', dubh ann a' sin. 'S ghnog e aig a' doras, ach cha d'fhuair e freagairt. Dh'fhosgail e sin 'doras 's char e staigh. Agus, eh, dar a char e a-staigh, bheothaich e sin 'n tein' 's, agus -- *Oh, I'm sorry.*

[*Recording is stopped and then resumes with:*]

**B.S.:** *I can start now, then.*

**D.C.:** *Yes.*

**B.S.:** Uill, 'se bh'ann rìgh òg na Fraing, 's bha dà mac aig'. Agus aon de na lathaichean thàinig bodach baigeir seachad. Agus char a' bodach baigeir gus an taigh, a' chaisteal rìgh. 'S fhuair e biadh ann a' sin 's, dar a thàinig dar bha e 'folbh, bha a' dà ghiollan 'cluicheach aig a' doras. 'S thuirt e ris a' bhàn-rìgh, " 'Ne -- 's brèagha a' dà ghiollan a th'agad, 'n dà mac a th'agad."

"O tha," thuirt a' bhàn-rìgh, "tha iad brèagha. O," thuirt i, "tha, 's tha iad measail air a chèil'."

"O ged a tha," thuirt a' bodach baigeir riuth', "ged a tha iad measail air a chèil', marbhaidh am fear eil' dhiubh fhathastaich."

'S nis dar a dh'fholbh a' bodach baigeir bha, bha an dà ghiollan 'cluicheach 's, thuirt iad ris a chèil', "An cual' tu dè thuirt a' bodach baigeir?"

"O chual'," thuirt a bhràthair.

Agus, eh, nis dh'fhàs aid gu bhith 'na' balaich, 's thuirt a' fear bu shin' diubh, "Uill," thuirt e, "gus a' breugaich sinn a' bodach baigeir," thuirt e, "tha mis' 'dol a dh'fholbh."

'S ghobh e sin beannachd le 'athair 's le 'mhàthair 's le 'bhràthair. 'S dar char e mach air a' gheat', bha *pillar* de chlach a's a' gheat 's thog e 'bhois 's thug e sgolt air. 'S thuirt e ri a bhràthair, "Fhad 's a bhios sin geal bidh mis' beò. Ach dar chì thu sin dearg, bidh mis' marbh."

Nis, bha 'bhràthair 'sealltainn air, [cho luath 's a] dh'èirich e 'sa mhadainn bha e 'dol mach a shealltainn air a' gheat, bha a' bhois geal. Ach aon de na lathaichean thàinig e mach 's, bha a' bhois dearg. O, ruith e staigh gu 'athair 's thuirt e ri 'athair, "Tha mo bhràthair marbh."

"Ciamar tha fhios a'ad?" thuirt 'athair ris, a' rìgh ris.

"O," thuirt e, "tha làrach a' bhois dearg, agus, tha mis' 'dol a dh'fholbh," thuirt e "gus am faic mi dè dh'èirich dha."

Agus nis, dar a dh'fholbh a bhràthair, bha e air oighreachd rìgh eil' ann a' sin agus phòs e, 's bha bean aige fhèin a' sin. 'S an oidhch' seo dar a char iad 'laigh', chaidh e fhèi' 's a' bhean, chual' e fuaim, 's thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Dè 'fuaim tha sin?"

"Och," thuirt a' bhean ris, "chan eil ach seannach. Tha e ag iarraidh 'ruagadh."

"Uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd," thuirt e. 'S as dèidh a' seannaich a thug e. 'S far a' b'ìosal air-eas b'àird air a' t-seannach, 's far a' b'àird' air a' t-seannach b'ìosal air-eas, gus do ruig e taigh fad' -- fad', caol, dubh. 'S char e a-staigh.

Bha 'chù 's 'each 's a sheabhag cuide ris, a rugadh an aon oidhch' ris fhèin. Agus an oidhch' bha seo dar a bha e ann 'n sin 'na shuidh' 's tein' mòr aig' air, dar a thàinig gnog gus a' doras.

"Cò tha sin?" thuirt e.

"O chan eil," thuirt is', "ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i null air oidhch', 's bios i nall air oidhch', 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

"O ma tha, 'Chaillich," thuirt es', "cha bhì thu nochd ann."

"Och, ud, ud!" thuirt is', "nach leig thu staigh mi?"

Agus, eh, "Uill, uill, thig a-staigh ma tha," thuirt e.

"O," thuirt i ris, "tha feagal orm às na beothaichean agad."

"Och, chan eagal. Cha bhean na beothaichean dhut."

"O beanaidh," thuirt i. Agus, eh, "Ceangail aid."

"Chan eil dad agam leis an ceangail mi iad."

"Seo," thuirt e (*sic*), thuirt a' chailleach ris, "shin agad ròineag às a leithid seo a dh'àite dhuit. [B.S. *laughs.*] Agus ceangail iad."

"Mo Dhia," thuirt e, "chan eil thu dona, a Chaillich."

Agus cheangail e sin na beothaichean aig, 'cù 's 'each 's a sheabhag, leis a' ròineag. Agus thàinig a' chailleach staigh 's bha i 'na suidh' aig an tein'. Dar thàinig i staigh, "Ahhh," 's, bheireadh e sùil oirr' 's, thuirt e rith', "Dhia, a Chaillich, tha thu 'fas mòr."

"Och," thuirt i ris, "m'iteagan 's m'òiteagan tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

O thug e sùil rithist oirr' 's thuirt e rith' gu' robh i 'fàs mòr.

"Tha, bios fhios a'ad air sin," thuirt i. Agus, leum a' chailleach air. Bha e fhèin 's a' chailleach a' sin 'sabaid, 's chuir a' chailleach gu 'ghlùinean e. 'S thug e sin glaoth air 'each 's 'chù 's a sheabhag a rug an aon oidhche ris fhèin carson nach biodh aid ann a' sin.

"Haa," thuirt a' chailleach ris, "chan eil sin agad. Teannaich a' riob 's na leig a' fad."

Theannaich a' ròinneag air amhaich na beothaichean 's, thachd i aid. 'S mharbh a' chailleach e -- ann a' sin.

Ach nis, thàinig a bhràthair gu taigh ... gu taigh a bhràthar. 'S choinnich e a' bhean aig' 's thuirt i ris, "Dhia glèidh mi," thuirt i, "càit' a' robh thu raoir?"

"Och, hud, chan eil fhios a'm cà'," thuirt e rith', "robh mi, ach."

Thàinig e sin staigh 's. Agus, eh, thàinig sin tìd' dhol laigh' 's, char e laigh' 's. Dar a char e 'laighe, thug e an claidheamh aig' às an truaill 's, tharraing e eadar e fhèin agus bean a bhràthar e. 'S cha robh iad fad' 'na laigh' dar thàinig a' seannach a-rithistich, 's thug e sùil 's, ghlaodh e dè bha sin.

"Och," thuirt is', "an seannach bha thu as a dhèidh a' raoir. Tha e ag iarraidh 'ruagadh."

"Uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

Agus dh'èirich e, 's as dèidh a' t-seannaich a thug e. 'S far a b'iosal air-eas b'àird air a' t-seannach, 's far a b'àird' air-eas b'iosal air a' t-seannach, gus do ruig e an taigh a's a' robh a bhràthair.

Chaidh e sin staigh 's, rinn e mar rinn a bhràthair, 's chuir e tein' air 's, bha e 'na shuidh'. 'S bha na beothaichean aig' cuide ris, a chù 's 'each 's a sheabhag 's. Cha robh e fad staigh, ma mheadhon-oidhch' dar thàinig guth gus a' doras, 's gnog.

"Leig ataigh mi," thuirt i.

"Cò tha sin?"

"O chan eil ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i nall air oidhch', 's bios i null air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

"Och, ma tha, a chaillich," thuirt es', cha bhi thu ann a' seo a-nochd."

[DC *chuckles.*]

Agus, "Och, hud, hud!" thuirt i, "nach leig thu staigh mi?" Agus, "Chan eil annam ach seann bhoirionnach bochd. Leig staigh mi."

"Thig a-staigh ma tha."

"O, tha feagal orm air do chuid beothaichean."

Agus, eh, "O, cha bhean na beoth'--"

"Ooo," thuirt i, "ceangail, ceangail aid. Seo," thuirt i, "shin agad ròineag thugad, agus ceangail do chuid beothaichean."

"O mo chaillich," thuirt e rith', "chan eil thu dona," thuirt e, "dar a tha do ròineag mar sin," thuirt e.

'S dar fhuair e a' ròineag, thilg e a's a' tein' i. 'S rinn, rinn a' ròineag urchair 's thug i leis leth an t-simileir cuide rith'.

Agus thuirt a' chailleach ris, "Dè bha siud?"

"O, chan eil," thuirt e, "ach rud bha a's an tein'."

A's an tein'. Agus, nis, dar a thàinig sin a' chailleach staigh, chuir e -- cheangail e le sreang na beothaichean aig' 's, thàinig a' chailleach staigh 's, rinn i a' dearbh rud air-eas a rinn i air a bhràthair. Dar thàinig i staigh, bha i 'na boirionnach, ach bha i 'fàs mòr, 's bha i 'fàs mòr.

"Dhia, a chaillich," thuirt e, "tha thu 'fàs mòr."

"Chan eil," thuirt i, "ach m'iteagan 's m'òiteagan tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

Ach thug e sin an ath-shùil oirr' 's, bha a' chailleach riamh 'fàs mòr, 's 'fàs mòr. Ach, eh, thug e sin glaoth a-rithisti' gu' robh i 'fàs mòr.

"Ah," thuirt i, "bios fhios a'd air sin."

Leum i sin air, agus leum e, 's bha iad 'sabaid ann an taigh ann a' sin ach, rinn i an dearbh rud air-eas a rinn i air a bhràthair. Chuir i gu 'ghlùinean e, agus bha i 'dol ga mharbhadh. 'S thug es' glaoth air 'chù 's air 'each 's air a sheabhag a rugadh an aon oidhch' ris fhèin carson nach biodh aid ann a' sin.

"Haa," thuirt a' chailleach, thuirt i, "chan eil sin agad. Teannaich a' riob 's na leig a' fad."

Ach, cha do cheangail es' leis a' ròineag [sin], chuir e, chuir e sreang orr'-as. 'S thàinig na beothaichean, 's an t-each aig' 's, bhreab e 'chaillich, 's thàinig an cù 's thug e pìosan áisd', 's an t-seabhag 's, mharbh e a' chailleach.

"Nis," thuirt e rith', mus do mharbh e i, thug, thug e a' ch--

"O," thuirt is', "leig an àird mi."

"Cha leig," thuirt es', "gus an innis thu dhomh-as dè rinn thu ri mo bhràthair."

Dh'innis i nis dha gu' do mharbh i a bhràthair agus cà' do chuir i e. Agus mharbh e sin a' chailleach. Agus, eh, fhuair e sin an caman iochdar 's an claidheamh gach solas, 's thug e beò a bhràthair. Agus bha e fhèin, bha e fhèin 's a bhràthair nis -- thàinig e beò rithistich 's, bha aid 'cnacaireachd aig taobh 'tein' ann a' sin 's. Agus, eh, thuirt a bhràthair ris, "Càit' a' robh thu raoir?"

"O," thuirt e, "bha mis' 'laigh cuide ris a' bhean agad."

"Cuide ris a' bhean agam-as?"



"Tha," thuirt e.

"O mhic a' fear ud!" thuirt es', "gu' robh thu staigh cuide ris a' bhean agam!" [*B.S.'s voice is filled with laughter.*] Thog es' a chlaidheamh 's, gheàrr e an ceann dhe 'bhràthair.

'S thàinig e sin dhachaidh. 'S dh'fhàg e 'bhràthair ann a' sin. Agus, eh, dar a thàinig e sin dhachaidh, choinnich a' bhean e 's. Agus rinn i, ruith is' 'na choinneamh agus, "O glèidh Dia m'anam," thuirt i, "cà 'm beil thu 'toir' ort?"

Ach, dh'innis e sin dhith 's, thàinig e sin staigh 's, fhuair e 'bhiadh, 's char aid, thàinig tìd' dhol laigh' 's char aid laigh'. Agus, dar a char iad laigh', thuirt a' bhean ris, "Gu dè bh'ort a' raoir?" thuirt i. "Dar char sinn laigh'," thuirt i, "tharraing thu an claidheamh a'ad staigh eadarainn."

"Do rinn mi sin?" thuirt e.

"Rinn."

"O ma rinn," thuirt e, "cha laigh mis' a-nochd ann."

Agus thog e sin 'aodach a-rithistich 's, thog e air 's, chaidh e air ais far a' robh 'bhràthair. 'S thog e sin an caman iochdar 's an claidheamh gach solas, 's thug e beò 'bhràthair a-rithistich. Agus, eh, "Carson," thuirt e, "nach do dh'innis thu raoir dhomh," thuirt e, "gu' do, gu' tug thu an claidheamh a-staigh eadaram fhèin agus a' bhean agam-as?"

"Cha robh fhios agam-as," thuirt a bhràthair, "gu' robh thus', robh thus' dol gam mharbhadh-as airson sin."

Agus, dar a ruig -- thàinig aid sin air ais le chèil', an dithis dhiubh cuideachd, 's sheas aid.

"O," thuirt a' bhean, "tha dithis dhaoin' agam a-nis. Chan eil fhios agam cò an duin' agam," thuirt i.

"Uill," thuirt an duin' aice fhèin rith', "feuch dèan thu mach cò a' duin'."

"Uill," thuirt i, "cha dèan. Ach cuiribh mach na làmhnan agai'."

'S chuir es' mach a làmhnan. Agus dar a chuir e mach a làmhnan bha fhios aice. Uill, bha bàrr na corraig bheag dheth 's, dhen an duin' aic' fhèin. Bha aid cho colach ri chèil' agus, ged a, nach dèanadh i mach a' darna fear às an fhear eil' dhiubh.

Agus, eh, chum iad nis ann a' sin oidhch' mhòr, eadar e fhèin 's a bhràthair 's a' bhean aig' 's, gus a' robh na h-uile dad seachad. 'S thàinig an sin a bhràthair air ais ach -- "Uill," thuirt a bhràthair ris, "cha do, cha do bhreugaich sinn a' bodach baigeir. Mharbh a' darna fear againn a' fear eil' diubh."

Agus thàinig sin a bhràthair air ais gu oighreachd 'athar. 'S dh'fhuirich a bhràthair eil' far a' robh e. 'S chan fhios agam as nach eil aid [*pauses and claps hands for rhythmic emphasis*] 'beò fhathastaich ach, chan eil fhios agam-as.<sup>2</sup> Shin ceann na stòiridh ann a' sin a-nis.

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<sup>2</sup>These last three sentences are said very quickly.

## AM BODACH BAIGEIR

**Date:** 1977

**Collector:** David Clement

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 956<sup>1</sup>**

Thàinig a' bodach baigeir gus a', eh, taigh, taigh na, na, 'n duin' uasal, dar bha 'n dà bhràthair 'cluicheachd, 's dar chaidh e gus an doras an àird a dh'iarraidh *meal* dha fhèin, thuirt e ris a', màthair aon de na balaich, thuirt e,

" 'Ne sin an dà ghiollan agad?"

"O 'se," thuirt i.

Thuirt e, "Tha iad glè mheasail air a chèil'."

"O," thuirt i, "tha."

"Ach," thuirt es', "ged a tha iad measail air a chèil', marbhas 'n darna fear a' fear eile diubh fhathastaich."

*Och I'm sure I gave it to you.*

**A woman [probably Ina Stewart]:** Oh I'm sure, I think you did.

**B.S.:** Well I've heard so many.... It'll pass the time.

Uill a-nis, chaidh 'm bodach baigeir bha seo, bha e 'rathad. Bha e 'baig' 's bha e 'rathad. 'S thàinig e gus an oighreachd a bha seo, agus thuirt e ris fhèin, "Och, cha chreid mi nach tèid mi 'n àird a' seo, feuch a' faigh mi grèim a dh'itheas mi."

'S dar chaidh e 'n àird chun a' *drive* bha 'n dà bhalach -- bha an dà ghiollan -- bha iad mach 'cluicheachd. Agus thug a' baigeir sùil orr'-s' agus, eh, chunnaic e gu' robh aid glè measail air a chèil'. Char e sin gu doras a' taigh mhòir 's, agus, ghnog e aig a' doras.

Fhuair e gu leòr bhuapa 's, thuirt e a' sin ris a' bhean, " 'Ne sin do dhithis mhic?" thuirt e, "an dà ghiollan a'ad?"

" 'Se," thuirt i.

"O," thuirt e, "tha iad measail air a chèil'," thuirt e, "ach ged a tha iad measail air a' chèil', marbhaidh an darna fear a' fear eil' dhiubh fhathastaich."

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<sup>1</sup>I have had some difficulty identifying the correct number of this recording, due to the fact that among the Linguistic Survey of Scotland recordings there are *two* tapes labelled "956," each of which has different contents. The tape which contains the present story is continued onto tape 1018, which is dated April 1977. The original hand-written transcript of the present story also says "April 1977" for which reasons it seems logical to assign the present recording to that date. After examining other documentation related to the Linguistic Survey tapes, I have come to the conclusion that the tape which contains the present story is probably the recording which should be labelled "956"; the other tape was probably labelled "956" by accident. Anyone wishing to listen to the original recording from which the present transcription was made should make a note of the existence of both tapes, and make sure to obtain the Tape 956 which corresponds to this story.

Agus, dh'fholbh sin a' bodach baigeir. Ghobh e air adhairt, a' rathad 's.

Sin dh'fhàs na balaich gu' tàinig iad 'na' balaich. Agus nìs chual' es' a' rud thuirt a' bodach baigeir.

'S thuirt aon de na bràithrean ris an fhear eil, "Uill," thuirt e, "tha mis' 'dol a dh'fholbh," thuirt e, "gus a' breugaich mi a' bodach baigeir."

Agus thog e 'bhois, 's dar bha e 'dol mach air a' gheat mhòr, bha clach a' *phillar* a's a' gheat 's thog e 'bhois.

"Nis," thuirt e, "fhad' 's bhios sin geal," thuirt e, "bidh mis' beò. Ach ma bhios e dearg," thuirt e ri 'bhràthair, "bios fhios a'ad," thuirt e, "gum beil mis' marbh."

Agus dh'fholbh e sin 's, agus bha a bhràthair a' sin 'dol a h-uile lath' gus a' chlach, 's bha i -- 'làimh, a' bhois aig', làrach a' làimh aig', geal.

Agus, eh, dh'fholbh a' sin a' fear eil' 's, thàinig e air adhairt 's, fhuair e sin àit' dha fhèin air, àit' eil' air oighreachd eil' 's, phòs e. Agus, eh ... eh, 'n oidhch' phòs e, cha robh e fad' 'sa leabaidh dar thàinig fuaim 's thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Dè tha sin?" thuirt e.

"Och chan eil," thuirt i ri', "ach seannach tha ag iarraidh 'ruagadh."

"Uill, ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh," thuirt e, "gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd."

Dh'èirich e sin às a' leabaidh 's as dèidh a' seannach a ghobh e. Far a' b'àird air-eas b'iosal air a' t-seannach, 's far a' b'iosal air-eas b'àird air a' t-seannach, gus do ruig e taighean fad dubh ann a' sin. 'S char e sin staigh 's, [] dhan taigh 's, agus cha robh gin ann dar thàinig e. Ach thug e leis co-dhiubh a chù 's 'each 's a sheòbhag, bha aid cuide ris. Dh'iarr e sin bhith cuide ris. Agus, thug e sin staigh na beothaichean aig'-eas. Dh'fheuraich e 'n t-each aig' 's thug e biadh dhan a' chù aig' 's dhan a' t-seòbhag aig' 's. Chuir e tein' mòr air 's, cha robh e fad' ann a' shin dar thàinig gnog gus an doras.

"Cò tha sin?" thuirt e.

"Ooo," thuirt i ris, "cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i a-null air oidh-- beinn, 's bios i a-nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

"Och ma thà, 'chaillich," thuirt e, "cha bhì thu a-nochd ann."

"Ud!" thuirt i, "na bì mar sin, leig staigh mi."

"Cha leig," thuirt e.

"Och," thuirt i, "leig staigh mi."

Ach sin dh'èirich e 's dh'fhosgail e 'dorus 's thàinig i staigh.

Chan e -- mus tàinig i staigh thuirt i ris, eh, "Ceangail do chuid beothaichean."

"Ach," thuirt e rith', "chan eil dad agam cheanglas na beothaichean."

"Seo," thuirt e (*sic*), "shin agad ròineag às -- á seo," thuirt i, "á seo, 's ceangail na beothaichean agad."

Agus, fhuair e a' ròineag aig a' chailleach, 's cheangail e na beothaichean.

Thàinig i shin staigh 's, rinn i suidh'. Ach bha 'chailleach fàs mòr. Bha i 'fàs mòr, 'fàs mòr.

'S thuirt e a' sin rith', "Tha thu 'fàs mòr, a chaillich."

Agus, "Och," thuirt i, "chan eil ach m'iteagan is m'òiteagan," thuirt i, "tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

Agus, eh. Ach thuirt e sin rithist rith' e, gu' robh i 'fàs mòr.

Agus, eh, "Bios fhios agad air sin," thuirt a' chailleach.

'S dh'èirich i 'n àird, fhuair i grèim air, 's dha chèil' a ghobhaid a' sin. Ach, chuir a' chailleach mhòr, chuir i gu, gu 'ghlùinean e, 's thuirt, thuirt a' balach, thug e glaoth air 'cù 's air 'each 's air 'sheòbhag.

"Carson nach biodh aid ann a' seo?" thuirt e.

"Heeeh," thuirt i ri, "chan eil sin agad. Teannaich a riob, 's na leig a' fad."

Theannaich a' ròineag air na h-amhaichean ac', 's thachd i aid. 'S mharbh i 'balach.

Thàinig sin a bhràthair, bha e 'sealltainn a h-uile latha air a' chlach, ach chunnaic e -- 'latha seo, thàinig e mach 's chunnaic e gu' robh, eh, 'làrach dearg.

O thàinig e air ais gu 'màthair 's thuirt e rith', "Tha mo bhràthair marbh," thuirt e. " 'S feumaidh mis'," thuirt e, "dhol a dh'fhaicinn dè dh'èirich dha."

Dh'fholbh es' sin 's rinn e an dearbh *journey* rinn a bhràthair. Nis, eh, bha iad glè cholach ri chèil'. Agus, eh ... thuirt a' ... thàinig e sin gus a' taigh aig a bhràthair.

"Och, Dhia glèidh m'anam," thuirt, thuirt a' bhean aig ris, "cà' deach thu raoir?"

"Och," thuirt es', "cha deach ach as dèidh a' t-seannaich bha siod."

Agus thàinig e sin 's chuir e 'n oidhch' seachad, agus, dar a char iad sin, thàinig tìd' dhol laigh' 's char e 'laigh'. Dar char es' laigh', tharruing e an claidheamh aig' fhèin eadar eis fhèin agus a' bhean. Agus, eh, cha robh iad fad' 'na' laigh' dar thàinig a' seannach a-rithistich.

'S thuirt e, "Dè tha sin?"

"O," thuirt i, "seannach tha ag iarraidh 'ruagadh'."

"Uill," thuirt e, "ma fhuair e 'ruagadh riamh gheobh e 'ruagadh nochd'."

"Och," thuirt is', "nach fhoghain folbh raoir, carson tha thu 'dol dh'fholbh a-nochd as a dhèidh?"

"O, tha mis' 'dol as dèidh'."

Thog e air 's, as dèidh an t-seannach a ghobh e. 'S chum e air a' t-seannach gus do ruig e an taigh a's a' deach a bhràthair -- [far] a' robh 'bhràthair. 'S bha 'chù 's 'each a sheòbhag cuide ris. Agus, eh, chaidh e sin staigh 's, chuir e tein' mòr air 's. Agus, eh, cha robh e fad' staigh dar a chual' e gnog aig a' dorasd.

"Cò tha sin?" thuirt e.

"O chan eil ach cearc bruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i null air beinn 's bios i nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

"Ohe ma tha, 'chaillich," thuirt e, "cha bhi thu oidhch' a-nochd ann."

"Och tud! tud!" thuirt i, "leig a-staigh mi."

"Och, ma tha," thuirt e, "thig staigh."

"O, Dia, tha feagal orm air do chuid beothaichean. Ceangail aid."

"Chan eil dad agam cheanglas iad."

"Seo," thuirt i, "shin a'ad ròineag. Eh, [...] seo dhut, ceangail iad."

Agus, eh, "Dhia," thuirt a' balach ris fhèin, " 'chaillich, ma tha do ròineag cho math sin dè th'annad fhèin?"

Thog e 'ròineag, 's dar chuir e 'ròineag a's an tein', thilg e a's an tein' i. Agus, eh, rinn a' ròineag aon urchair 's, thug i leis bràigh an t-simileir cuide rith'. 'S cheangail am balach a chuid beothaichean le sreang a fhuair e. 'S mar a dh'èirich dha 'bhràthair, thuirt e rith' gu' robh i 'fàs mòr.

"Och, m'iteagan 's m'òiteagan," thuirt i, "tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

Ach, eh, thuirt e sin rithist' e, gu' robh i 'fàs nas muth' 's nas muth'.

"Bios fhios a'ad air sin."

Dh'èirich a' sin a' chailleach 's, fhuair i grèim air a' bhalach 's bha aid sin a's a chèil', air ais 's air adhart troimhn taigh ann a' shin 's. Ach leag i e, 's bha i 'dol a chur -- a thachdadh e.

'S thuirt a' balach rith', "Cà'l mo chù 's m'each 's mo sheòbhag a rugadh an aon oidhch' rium fhèin, carson nach biodh aid ann a' seo?"

"Hooo," thuirt i, "chan eil sin agad. Teannaich a riob, 's cha<sup>2</sup> leig a' fad."

"Haaa," thuirt es' rith', "chan eil sin agad-as 'chaillich."

Agus thàinig sin 'n t-each, 's thionndan e 'cheann deiridh rith' 's thug e buill' oirr' le 'chasan 's thug -- leum an t-seòbhag oirr' 's, an cù aig'-eas' -- thug aid, chuir e às dhan a' chailleach.

Agus, nis, fhuair e 'bhràthair. Bha e marbh 's thug e leis 'rud a bh'aca airson bhith 'ga thoir' beò -- eh, an caman iochdar 's an claidheamh gach solus, 's thug e beò 'bhràthair.

Agus, eh, nise bha aid sin, eh, 'bruidhinn, agus -- aig taobh an tein'. 'S thuirt a' -- bha sin a' fear eil' 'g innseadh mu dheidhinn a' bhean aig'.

"Och, ma tha," thuirt a bhràthair ris, "ma bha-- tha do bhean cho math sin, bha mis' 'na mo laighe cuide rith' a' raoir."

"O m'hic an truaigh!" thuirt es', "robh thus' 'laighe cuide ris a' bhean agam?"

Dh'èirich e 'n àird 's thog e a chladheamh 's, gheàrr e -- mharbh e 'bhràthair. 'S dh'fhàg e ann a' sin e, dh'fholbh e sin dhachaidh.

Agus, eh, thàinig e sin staigh 's, air ais gus an taigh aige fhèin 's, thuirt a' bhean ris, "Dhia glèidh m'anam, dh'fholbh-- dh'fholbh thu raoir, 's dh'fholbh thu 'n oidhch' roimhne sin. Cà' robh --? Agus rud eil' rinn thu raoir," thuirt i, "dar char thu laigh' -- dar char sinn laigh'," thuirt i, "carson a tharruing thu 'n claidheamh eadar mi fhèin 's thu fhèin?"

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<sup>2</sup>Here Brian forms the negative imperative by using the negative particle *cha* -- a usage which is widespread in East Sutherland Gaelic. See Dorian (1978: 120) for details. B.S. also uses this form in the 1993 recording of this story, but uses the negative particle *na* in the 1974 recordings.



"An do rinn mi sin?" thuirt e.

"Rinn," thuirt e (*sic*).

Thionndan e sin air ais a sh-- air, air a shàil, 's ghobh e air ais gu 'bhràthair. 'S rinn es' an dearbh rud ri 'bhràthair 's a rinn a bhràthair air-eas. Thug e [...] thug e beò a-rithistich e. Agus, thàinig iad sin air ais gus a' taigh aig a', aig a' bhràthair.

'S a' bhean, bha i mach, 's thuirt i riuth', "Ooo," thuirt i, riuth', "chan eil fhios agam-as cò 'n duin' agam. Tha si' cho colach ri chèil'," thuirt i, "cha dèan mi mach cò agai'. Ach," thuirt i, "cuiribh mach na làmhan."

'S thuirt a bhràthair ris, "O, uill," thuirt e, "dar chuireas mi mach mo làmhan," thuirt e, "faithnichidh -- uill tha bàrr na corraig bheag dhiom."

'S, shin rathad rinn i mach a' bràthair.

'S thuirt an darn bràthair ris a' fhear-- bhràthair eil', "Uill," thuirt e, "dh'fholbh thus' airson [...] a dhèanamh a' bodach baigeir breugach, 's dh'fhàg thu mis' air mo (*sic*) chùlaibh. 'S cha do rinn sinn breugach e," thuirt e. "Mharbh 'n darna fear 'm fear eil' againn."

'S shin a'ad a-nis ceann na stòiridh sin.

**D.C.:** Dìreach, dìreach, dìreach ceann an *tape*.

[*Tape ends.*]

## AM BODACH BAIGEIR

**Date:** 24 September 1993

**Collector:** Carol Zall

[*Note: This story follows on directly from the 24 September 1993 transcript of Stòiridh a' Chòcaire. B.S. treats it as a continuation of Stòiridh a' Chòcaire thus only the second part of the story is here.*]

**C.Z.** Bha sin math.

**B.S.:** 'S an sin, am balach phòs nighean a' rìgh [*pause*] bha e fhèi 's a' nighean, a' bhean aig', cuideachd 's, bha iad a' laighe oidhch' 's chual' e fuaim, 's thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Dè tha sin?"

"Och," thuirt i, "seannach. Tha e ag iarraidh ruagadh."

"Och, ma fhuair e ruagadh a-riamh, gheobh e ruagadh a-nochd."

'S dh'èirich e mach às a' leabaidh 's, ghobh e as dèidh an t-seannach.

Far a b'ìosal air-eas b'àird air an t-seannach, ach. Ruig es' taigh fad, caol, dubh ann a' sin 's, ghnog e aig a' doras. 'S dh'fhosgail iad an doras dha. Thàinig e staigh.

Bha a chù 's 'each 'sa a sheabhag aig' cuide ris, agus. A rugadh an aon oidhch' ris fhèin. Thug e, 's rug i, rug i sin, 'n tè bha seo, a' chailleach bha seo, a-staigh e. Bha e 'na shuidh' 's bha e 'sealltainn oir'.

"O mo chreach, a Chailleach!" thuirt e, "tha thu 'fàs mòr."

"O," thuirt i, "m'iteagan is m'òiteagan tha breò ris na h-èibhlean."

Ach thuirt e ris (*sic*) a-rithisti' e, gu' robh i 'fàs mòr. Thuirt e rith' trì trioban e, gu' robh i 'fàs mòr. Ach bho dheireadh, chaill i an *temper* leis.

"O," thuirt i, "bios fhios a'ad air sin."

'S leum i air, 's thug i gu 'ghluinean e. [*pause*]

'S thuirt es', "Cà bheil mo chù 's m'each 's mo sheabhag? Carson nach biodh iad a' seo?"

"Ha!" thuirt i, "chan eil sin agad."

"O tà, 'chaillich," thuirt e, "tha e agam."

'S thàinig an cù 's an t-each 's an seabhag, 's thug an t-each breab oirr'. 'S thug an cù pìos às a' cheann eil' aic'-eas. Leig i às e 's. Ach, eh, chaidh mi roimhn a' sin, rinn, rinn mi -- feumaidh mi dhol air ais seachad air a' sin.

Bràthair, bha dà, bha bràthair aig'. Agus bean a' bhràthar. 'S dh'fholbh a' bràthair 's rinn e an [...] bha es' ruith as dèidh a' seannach. 'S thàinig e gus an taigh seo. 'S mharbh a' chailleach e.

[*Interruption here. Health worker comes in and says "Good morning, folks!" B.S. says "Good morning."*]

Bha fhios aig'-eas gur e, gun e 'chailleach a rinn e. [*Long pause.*] O chan e, thug, rinn mi mearachd ann a' shin a-nis.

**C.Z.:** Dè ?

**B.S.:** Thèid mi air ais gus a' chòcaire a-rithistich. Bha bràthair aig a' ghille a thug, eh, agus bha bean, bha bean, bha a bhràthair br-- bha 'bhràthair pòsd' cuideachd. 'S char es' gu taigh a bhràthar, a' gill' a phòs nighean a' rìgh, char e gu taigh a bhràthar. 'S bha e ann fad' na h-oidhch'. Agus. [*Pause.*] Dar thàinig a' seannach, dh'èirich e 's bha e 'ga ruagadh. 'S thug e leis a chù 's 'each 's a sheabhag a rugadh an aon oidhch' ris fhèin 's. Thàinig e gus an taigh sin. Ghnog e 's thug a' chailleach glaodh ris. Cha robh e fad' staigh dar a chual' e gnog 'tighinn gus a' doras.

"Cò tha sin?" thuirt e.

"O chan eil ach cearc bhruc na h-aon oidhch'. Bios i null air beinn, 's bios i a-nall air beinn, 's bios i oidhch' a' seo."

"Och ma tha, a' chaillich," thuirt e, "thig a-staigh," thuirt e.

Thug i staigh-- thug e staigh i, 's bha i 'na suidh'. Ach a' sin bha i 'fàs mòr, 's 'fàs mòr, 's 'fàs mòr.

"O a chaillich, thuirt e, "tha thu 'fàs mòr."

Ach thuirt e rith' trì trioban e. Ach dar a thuirt e rith' trì triob e,

"Bios fhios a'ad air sin," thuirt i.

Agus thuirt i -- dh'èighich e airson a chù 's 'each 's a sheabhag.

Thuirt i ris, "Teannaich a riob 's cha<sup>1</sup> leig a' fad."

"Ha," thuirt e, "a Chaillich, chan eil sin agad."

Thug an t-each, thug an t-each, thug e breab oirr'. Thàinig an cù 's leum e oirr' 's.

Ach mharbh e a' chailleach. 'S chunnaic e sin a bhràthair 's thug e 'bhràthair beò, thug e an caman iochdar 's an slacan draoidheachd 's thug e a bhràthair beò. Agus. Dar a thug e 'bhràthair beò, thuirt a bhrà' ris, "Càit' a' robh thu raoir?" thuirt e.

"O bha mis', eh, an taigh, an taigh agad fhèin raoir," thuirt e. "Bha mis' 'laighe cuide ris a' bhean agad."

"O, mhic na fear ud!" thuirt e, "robh thus' 'laigh'?" 'S thog a bhràthair a chladheamh aig' 's gheàrr e an ceann dhe 'bhràthair. Agus.

Char e sin dhachaidh, gus a' bhean aig'-eas.

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<sup>1</sup>Here B.S. forms the negative imperative by using the negative particle *cha*, which is widespread in East Sutherland Gaelic. See Dorian (1978: 120) for details. B.S. also uses this form in the 1977 recording of this story, but uses the negative particle *na* in the 1974 recordings.

'S thuirt i ris, "Gu dè bh'ort a' raoir? thuirt i, "Carson a thug thu an claidheamh staigh eadarainn dar a chaidh sinn laigh'?"

"Do rinn mi sin?" thuirt e.

"Rinn thu sinn," thuirt e (*sic*).

"O ma rinn," thuirt e, "cha chaidil mi nochd ann nas muth'."

'S dh'èirich e mach 'leabaidh 's dh'fholbh e. 'S thug, char e sin gus an taigh rithistich 's thug e 'bhràthair beò. Ghobh e an caman iochdar 's a' slacan draoidheachd dha 's, thug e beò e 's. Thàinig a' sin aid, thàinig an dithis dhiubh air ais, gu taigh a bhràthar. Thàinig bean a bhràthar mach.

"Nis," thuirt i, "cò an d-- Ooo," thuirt i, "cha dèan mi stem, chan eil fhios-am cò an duin' a th'a'am. Ach," thuirt i, "cuiribh mach, cuiribh mach na làmhnan."

Chuir iad mach na làmhnan. 'S bha barr na corrag beag air an duin' aic'.

"O, 'se seo e."

Shin agad a-nis. Bha aid ann a' sin cho math 's bha a' latha cho fad, e fhèin 's a' bhean aige, nighean a' rìgh, an dèidh sin. Ach cha chreid mi gu' do dh'innis mi stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich riut.

CZ: Dè stòiridh a tha sin?

[*B.S. continues with next story.*]

## STÒIRIDH A' CHAIMBEULAICH

**Date:** 1974

**Collector:** Donald Archie MacDonald

**School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1974/33/A2**

Uill [*pause*] bha e *supposed* gur e cìobair agus a' bhean aig' a bh'ann. Agus, eh, thàinig soitheach a-staigh gu tìr, 's thàinig an caiptein mach airson teatha<sup>1</sup> dha fhèin 's an *crew* aig'. 'S shìn e air bruidhinn ris a' chìobair agus ris a' duin' agus ris a' bhean bha seo.

Agus, "O," thuirt e riuth', "tha sinn," thuirt e, "ann a' seo airson speileag an dràsdaich, air a' *yacht* againn agus, eh, bhithinn glè fhad' ann ur comainn nan tigeadh sì', an dithis agai', le chèil', nochd, gus a' bhàt'," thuirt e, " 's bhios dìot mhòr againn agus ceòl air a' bhàt'," thuirt e.

"O," thuirt an duine, "bhiodh sin glè mhath dhìot." 'S thug e tàing dha 's thuirt e gu' d'rachadh iad mach air a' bhàt'.

Agus, eh, o dh'innis e sin an uair a' tigeadh aid 's. 'S char an duin' 's a' bhean bhàn gus a' chladach 's chuir a' bàta beag mach air an shon. Char iad sin staigh air a', air a' *yacht* 's. Ach a' seo bha bàl 'dol 's bha ceòl 'dol 's dawns' a' dol ann 's, h-uile nì gus do-- bha e shìn fàs, ghobh e speil dhen oidhch' 's thuirt an duin' ris a' bhean, "Och uill, cha chreid mi nach eil a' tìd' againn," thuirt e, "a bhith 'tilleadh dhachaidh."

"Hmm," thuirt an caiptein ris, "tha a' feagal orm," thuirt e, "nach fhaigh-- tèid dhachaidh a-nochd." Thuirt e, "Tha thu pìos, mìltean maith a-staigh a's a' chuan a-nis." 'S thug -- char an duin' an àird air a' deic, 's dar a sheall e sin-ach bha an soitheach bha i 'gabhail a' chuan, mach an teis meadhon an cuan.

Agus, eh, "Nis," thuirt e, "rinn mis' ort e. Uill, tha mis' ag iarraidh a' bhean agad-as, agus a' bhean tha mi 'dol a dh'fhaighinn," thuirt e. Agus, eh, bha iad sin 'dol a thilgeil a', an Caimbeulach, bha iad 'dol a thilgeil thairis air a' bhòrd e.

"O fuirichibh, fuirich'," thuirt a' bhean ris. "Na dèanaibh sin air. Agus, eh, mus cuir sì' mach air a' -- mar sin e," thuirt e (*sic*), "dèanaibh bocas bhios dìonach agus mòr gu leòr, chumas es' agus a bheir staigh gu tìr e, bocas'," thuirt i, "nach leig a-staigh an t-uisg', agus dh', dh', dh'fhaodadh gu toireadh e gu tìr an àit-eigin e. Fàgaibh a' bheò aig'."

"Ah, uill," thuirt an caiptein, bha sin ceart gu leòr, dhèanadh e sin.

Rinn iad sin bocas mòr bha seo 's, "Nis," thuirt i, "dar a chuireas sì' a-staigh e cuiribh sì', curibh sì' gu leòr dhen a' bhiadh 's uisg' a-staigh dha."

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<sup>1</sup>"Tea".



'S chuir aid a' rud a thuirt i, a' biadh 's uisg', 's chaidh sin *lowerigeadh* bhàn dan an uisg'. Agus, eh, dar a chaidh, dh'fholbh a' sin 'bàt', 's leag aid bhàn an Caimbeulach a's an uisg'. 'S bha am bocsa', bha e dìonach 's, chum na tuinn an taobh a-staigh e gus do chuir e a-staigh gu tìr e.

'S bha an duine seo, bha e air a' chladach. Bha e as dèidh nan caorach aig', 's chunnaic e a' bocas mòr a bha seo 's. Char e bhàn 's, gus a' bhocas 's tharruing a-staigh e 's, chual' e sin am fear bha 'na bhroinn, thug e an èigh ris, thuirt e, " An e duin' a tha sin?"

" 'Se," thuirt a' duin'. "Cò tha siod? -- O," thuirt e, "bris bhàn a' bocsa'."

O bhris e bhàn a' bocas agus, thàinig 'duin' a bha seo mach [bhàn] 's bha e, bha e coltach -- an Caimbeulach, bha e coltach ri beothach fiadhaich, le feusag 's le falt 's le salachar, 'shalachar fhèin 's a h-uile dad a bh'ann bha cuide ris.

"O," thuirt a' duin', "mus tig mis' a dh'ait'," thuirt e, "mus tèid mi staigh don an taigh agad, nam biodh thu cho math," thuirt e, "agus seann aodach fhaighinn dhomh-as, agus rud," thuirt e, "bheir dhìom, speal-bheòil a bheir dhìom an fheusag tha seo." Agus, eh, dh'fhàg an duine sin ann a' sin e, air a' chladach e, 's char e dhachaidh, gus an taigh aig', 's thug e leis an deis' aodach, agus, eh, rudan a bha e ag iarraidh. 'S ghlan an duin' e fhèin 's chuir e air an t-aodach. Agus, eh, dh'innis e sin na càsan aig' agus dè dhèirich dha.

"Agus, eh, chan eil fhios agam-sa," thuirt e, "dè dh'èirich dhan a' bhean. 'Se 's coltaich," thuirt e, "gu' bheil i air folbh cuide ris," thuirt e. "Bha aic' ri folbh," thuirt e.

Ach, eh, bha a' duin' --.

A' bhean, thuirt i ris a' chaitein nach d'rachadh i gu bràthach a's an aon leabaidh ris. 'S dar chunnaic e seo a-nis, 's thuirt i, "Cha tig thu gu bràthach faisg orm 's cha tèid mi gu bràthach, cha chaid-- cha chaidil mi a's an aon leabaidh riut."

'S dar chunnaic e seo a-nis, 'sann a chuir e is', chuir e gu tìr i. Agus dh'fholbh is' dar a char, dar a fhuair i gu tìr. Eh, gheàrr i am falt aic', agus chuir i aodach fìrionnach oirr' fhèin. Agus, eh, thàinig i gus an oighreachd bha seo, agus thill i mar gill' a bh'ann 's chum aid i, bha i 'na gill', 'na shraparach. Bha i 'strapaig'<sup>2</sup> nan eich an àird airson na, na *machineachan*, 's rud dhen t-seòrs' sin, 's bha i ag obair, ag obair air na h-eichibh, agus 'se balach a bh'innt'. 'S, eh, bha i shìn air ais 's air adhairt ann a' sin, 's, ach [aon] dhe na lathaichean, thàinig a' baigeir bha seo gus an àit'. 'S bha sin a' baigeir, bha -- thug aid obair dha cuideachd.

Agus, eh, a' bhean aig an uachdaran bha seo, eh, boirionnach òg a bh'innt' cuideachd, 's bha i 'gobhail *fancy* chianail dhen a', dhe, a' ghill' òg bha seo, dhe bean a' Chaimbeulaich, ach 'se, bha i 'na -- aodach fìrionnach air, 'dèanamh an àird coltach ri fìrionnach. Ghobh i *fancy* chianail dhith, 's thàinig i staigh don an stàbull far a' robh i 'latha seo. Agus, eh, 'sann a chuir

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<sup>2</sup>"strapaig": a Gaelicisation for "strapping" or "harnessing".

i guth 'na chluais, 's thuirt i rith' na' d'rachadh i staigh don a' t-sabhal cuide rith', gu' robh i deònach gu leòr dhol staigh don t-sabhal cuide rith'.

"O," thuirt a', eh, gill' seo ris,"(sic) "cha tèid mi staigh don t-sabhal cuide riut. Tha duin' agad fhèin, agus cha tèid mis' faisg ort," thuirt e, "agus, eh, chan eil iarraidh agam ri dhol faisg ort."

Dar a chuala bean an uachdarain seo thug i an èigh ais'. Thug i glaodh ais': "O, tha 'fear tha seo, tha e a' gobhail làimh dhiom-as."

Agus thàinig a' sin an t-uachdaran fhèin 's a chuid shluagh 's, "Dè tha seo? Dè tha seo?"

O, an gill' sin, eh, 'sann a bha e ag iarraidh orm dhol dhan a' t-sabhal cuide ris, 's chuir e lamhan orm 's."

O char iad sin beirsinn air, air a' bhalach bha seo, 's bha e 'dol a thoir pronnadh a chuid cnàimhean.

"O, fuirichibh," thuirt a' bhean, "mus dèan si' sin, mus dèan si' mis' chiùrradh ann an doigh sam bith. Agus feuch mis' dhuibh," thuirt i, "tha mis' cheart cho boirionn rith'-eas. 'S cha chreid mi," thuirt i, "gum bithinn-eas ag iarraidh oirr'-eas dhol don an t-sabhal, ach, dh'iarr is' orm-as a dhol, bha i an dùil gur e, gur, gur ann, g'ann, gur e fir a bh'annam. 'S dh'iarr is' orm-as a dhol. Agus shin agai'." Dh'fheuch i sin.

Och dar chual' e seo a-nis, thionndaidh e sin air a', air an tè aige-fhèin. Agus, thug e, chuir e air folbh i. Chan fhaodadh i bhith mun cuairt air an àit'. Uill, chunnaic e sin gur e boirionnach a bha seo agus 'se boirionnach brèagha a bh'innt'. Agus ma chuireas mi an tè agam fhèin air folbh, gum biodh an tè seo aig'. Ach, eh, cha ghobhadh i sin nas muth'.

Ach thàinig, bha a' bodach baigeir tha seo, bha e air ais 's air adhart mun cuairt air an àit' aic'.

Agus, thàinig e sin 'latha bha seo 's thuirt an t-uachdaran, "A-nis," thuirt e, "tha thus' gu bhith 'nad bhean agam-as." Agus, eh, thuirt e rith', "Cuir thus' ort a', a', an t-aodach còir a bhith ort."

Agus, eh, thuirt i, "Cha tig mis', cha tig mi faisg -- "

"O, mur tèid," thuirt e, bha e -- dè [bha e] 'dol a dhèanamh oirre, ach thug i mach an t-each aic' co-dhiubh.

Thug i mach dà each, 's thuirt i ris a' bhodach bhaigeir, "Am marcai-- an urr' dhut marcachd a dhèanamh?"

"O s'urrainn," thuirt e. "S'urrainn mi marcachd a dhèanamh." Thuirt i (sic) "Tha mi glè mhath air marcachd," thuirt e.

Agus, "Uill," thuirt i, "leum thus' air muin -- eh, marca' an each sin, cuir diollaid air."

'S dh'fholbh i, 's ghobh, eh, dar a dh'fholbh i leis an each agus leis, i fhèin 's a' bodach baigeir, ghobh an t-uachdaran agus aon de na gillea aig 'na' deaghaidh. 'S bheireadh i sùil air a culaibh, 's bheireadh i an èigh ris an duin' aice-fhèin ach, eh, bha fhios aic'-eas gur e es'

a bh'ann, ach cha do dh'aithnich es' is'. Agus bheireadh i glaodh ris air, air ais 'n dràsd' 's a-rithist air a cùlaibh, agus bheireadh an t-uach--

"Marcaich, a bhaigeir. Marcaich, a bhaigeir!" [...]

Bha a' baigeir a' marcachd cho math 's a b'urra' dha. Ach, eh, nis chan eil cuimhn' agam air a' chòrr dhith.

**D.A.M.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** Cha, chan eil cuimhn', cuimhn' agam ciamar, ciamar a chaidh an ceann oirr'. Ach, uh, fhuair i fhèin agus a' duin' bhith air ais cuideachd, co-dhiubh rithistich. Dar fhuair i es' air folbh, dh'innis i dha, "Tha, bha fhios agam-as," thuirt i, "a' chiad latha a thàinig thu gur e thus' a bh'ann. Ach," thuirt i, "bha feagal orm a ghràdh. Uill," thuirt i, "bha rudan ann nach b'urra dhomh inns' agus, eh, bha feagal orm sin ainmeach' an uair sin," thuirt i, "gun d'rach' thus' chur air folbh. Agus, eh, chum mi agam fhèin e," thuirt i, "nach robh mi 'gad aithneachainn idir."

Ach 'se a' bhean 's an duin' a choinnich a chèil' a-rithistich. Ach, chan eil cuimhn' agam, eh, ciamar, ciamar a thàinig, thàinig a' ceann oirr' a-nis, chan eil, 's cha chaomh leam bhith ag inns' ach rud nach eil, eh, nach urra' dhomh ceann a chur oirr'.

**D.A.M.:** Och uill, 'se deagh stòiridh tha sin cuideachd.

**B.S.:** O, dh'fhaodadh gun innis a-nis a' chailleach tha sin rudeigin, ma tha thu toilicht' [...].

**I.S.:** O chan urrainn dhomh stòiridhean innse idir.

[*Recording ends.*]

## STOIRIDH A' CHAIMBEULAICH

**Date:** July, 1975

**Collector:** David Clement

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 1003**

*[Note: The original recording of this story is missing. The transcript which follows is that which was made by Mrs. Peggy McClements for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland, and was never intended to be a final transcription. As I have not been able to listen to the recording myself, I have kept the transcription as I found it, the only alterations being minor changes to the orthography (e.g., the addition of apostrophes) in keeping with the rest of the transcriptions. Unfortunately, the transcription stops before the end of the story; this version is therefore incomplete.]*

Cìobair agus a' bhean aig 's latha dhe na lathaichean 's tìd' dhe na tìdean bha 'cìobair anns a' mhonadh 's chunnaic e an soitheach ud air flod mach anns a', a' mhuir. 'S thàinig e bhàn gus a' chladach gus am faiceadh e cò bh'ann. Agus dar thàinig e bhàn thàinig an caiptean a-mach 's chuir e guth air.

"O ma tha," thuirt an cìobair ris -- an Caimbeulach ris a' chaipitean, "Thig an àird gus an taigh," thuirt e, "agus gheobh thu do bhiadh."

Thàinig e sin an àird 's bha oidhch' chridheil ac' ann a' shin. 'S nis dar thàinig an thid' dhan a' chaipitean dhol air ais gus an t-soitheach aig 'sann a thuirt e ris a' chiob, ris a' Chaimbeulach agus ris a' bhean aige, "Och," thuirt e, "nach tig thu mach gus an t-soitheach 's bios oidhch' chridheil againn air, thu fhèin 's a' bhean," thuirt e.

"O carson nach deachaidh?" thuirt an Caimbeulach.

Char iad sin a-mach cuide ri fear an t-soitheach 's o, bha oidhch' chridheil ac' leoth'. Bha danns' ann 's bàl ac' 's gu leòir ri òl 's ri ith'. Agus sin dar thàinig an tìd' dhol dhachaidh bha an Caimbeulach, thuirt e ris a' chaipitein, "Och uill," thuirt e, "tha mi 'creidsinn gu bheil an thid' dhuinn a dhol dhachaidh. Ach shaoil leam," thuirt e, "gu bheil mi 'faireachdainn an t-soitheach a' gluas'."

"Huh!" thuirt an caipitean ris, "tha thu fad, fad mach air muir," thuirt e.

Agus "O!" thuirt an Caimbeulach, "dè 's ciall da seo? Dè, dè chuir seo 'nad cheann?"

"O," thuirt e, "ghobh mis'," thuirt e, "nòisean dhen a' bhean agad agus tha mis' 'dol a chumail a' bhean 's tha thus' 'dol a dh'fhaighinn walk the plank."

Agus o char sin a' bhean 's bha i [blank space in original transcript] air a' chaipitein leigeil leis, ach chan fhaodadh, chan fhàgadh.

"O," thuirt e, "chan urra dha bhith an seo."

"Uill," thuirt i, "mus cuir sibh mach e, nì sibh bosc' dha bhios dìonach agus a sheòlas, agus cuiribh sibh gu leòir biadh 's uisg' staigh cuide ris gus feuch tig e gu tìr an àit-eigin."

"Ach uill," thuirt an caiptean ris a' [blank space in original transcript], "tha si' cuidhte sin, dèanaibh sin dha," thuirt e. "Cha chuir sinn [line not completed in original transcript]."

Char sin am bocs' a dhèanamh 's char biadh 's char an t-uisg' thoirt [blank space in original transcript] 's thuirt sin an caiptean riuth' dar bha e deas, "Nis," thuirt e, "tilgi' thairis e." Char sin a thilgeil thairis a' chliathaich. Agus bha iad nis, bha e an dùil gum faigheadh e a thoil fhèin leis a' bhean on dh'fholbh an duin'. Ach thuirt a' bhean ris, "Cha tèid," thuirt i, "cha tèid mis' gu bràth anns an aon leabaidh riut gus an cuir thu mis' gu tìr an àit-eigin."

Ach dh'fheuch e rith' cho fad' 's a' b'urra dha, ach cha dèanadh e nì rith'. Nis bha iad 'seòladh an cuan air ais 's air adhart.

Bha sin an Caimbeulach anns a' bhocs' aig'. Ach latha dhe na lathaichean bha duin' air a' chladach 's chunnaic e am bocs' seo 'tighinn a-staigh. Agus "Dhia," thuirt e ris fhèin, "dè tha 'sa bhocs'?"

Agus char e gus a' chladach 's thug e, sheall e air a' bhocs', ach chual' e sin cuideigin a' gladhaich staigh 'sa bhocs'.

"O," thuirt e, "thoir mis' mach á seo."

"O fuirich," thuirt an duin', "gus an tig mis' air ais," thuirt e, "le rud," thuirt e, "bheir a bocs' às a chèil'."

Thàinig e sin air ais 's fhuair e [blank space in original transcript] 's rudan a bhristeadh am fiodh, a bheireadh air ais na tarraingean 's fhuair e an Caimbeulach. Ach o, cha b'urra dhan an duin' dhol faisg air. Bha e le falt 's le feusag 's le 'shalachar fhèin.

Agus thuirt an duin' ris, "O," thuirt e ris a' Chaimbeulach, "fuirich ann an sin," thuirt e, "agus dèan thus' an rud is urra dhut gad ghlanadh fhèin gus an tig mis' air ais bhon an taigh."

Dh'fholbh an duin' a-nis 's char e an àird gus an taigh aig' fhèin 's fhuair e siabunn 's fhuair e aodach a bhuineadh dha fhèin. Fhuair e ràsar agus, "Nis," thuirt e ris a' Chaimbeulach, "glan thu fhèin 's thoir dhiot an fheusag 's cuir ort an t-aodach tha seo." Dar rinn an duin' seo bha e 'sealltainn air 's 'se duin' brèagh' bha 'sa Chaimbeulach. Thug e sin an àird gus an taigh -- an dachaidh aig' fhèin 's fhuair e leabaidh 's fhuair e 'bhiadh.

" 'S nis," thuirt e ris a' Chaimbeulach, "ciamar a char do chur am bocs'?" 'S [Here there is a large blank space in the original transcript.]

'S dh'innis e facal air an fhacal: an t-soitheach thàinig a-staigh agus mar a chaidh a mhealladh staigh air an t-soitheach, e-fhèin 's a' bhean.

" 'S air gaol a' bhean," thuirt e, "char mis' thoirt dhan an t-soitheach."

"Och uill, dhuin' bhochd," thuirt e, " 's beil -- chan fhios agad cà' --."



"O," thuirt an Caimbeulach, "chan fhios a'm-as cà' beil a' bhean," thuirt e. "Tha mi cinnteach," thuirt e, "gum bi i cuide ris a' chaithean an àit-eigin air an t-soitheach. Ach nis," thuirt an duin', thuirt an Caimbeulach, "nam faighinn rudeigin a dhèanamh ..."

"O," thuirt an Caim-- thuirt an duin' seo ris a' Chaimbeulach, "tha taigh-seinns'," thuirt e, "chan eil e fad' o seo," thuirt e, "agus bios iad ag iarraidh feadhainn," thuirt e, "bho thid' gu tid' airson cobhair thoir dhaibh -- [*Here the transcript ends abruptly in mid-sentence and nothing more of the story is to be found.*]

## STÒIRIDH A' CHAIMBEULAICH

**Date:** 24 September 1993

**Collector:** Carol Zall

**B.S.:** .... Ach cha chreid mi gu' do dh'innis mi stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich riut.

**C.Z.:** Dè an stòiridh a tha sin? Cò an stòiridh a tha sin?

**B.S.:** Uill, dar a thug a' -- thug iad -- 's dar a char e staigh air a' t-soitheach, dar a thug aid, thug a', an caiptein, eh, chuir e cuireadh orr' a thighinn gu danns' a bh'ac', bàl a bh'ac' air an t-soitheach. 'S dar fhuair e air a' *yacht*, 's dar fhuair e air folbh aid, chum e iad. Cha leigeadh e às aid.

Bha an duin' 's a' bhean, bha aid a's an taigh aca 's thàinig *yacht*, *yacht* staigh gus a', dan a' bhàgh 's. Thàinig an caiptein mach 's. Char e gus an taigh ac' 's, thuirt e gu' robh e 'toir bàl a's a' *yacht*, nan tigeadh a' duin' 's a' bhean, gu' biodh iad di-beitht'. Ah, uill, uill. Char aid sin air an t-soitheach 's. Ach, dar char aid air an t-soitheach, shìn i air seòladh. 'S bha a' bhean ag iarraidh dhachaidh, gus an taigh aic', 's cha leigeadh an caiptein, cha leigeadh e às i. Bha e 'ga cumail.

"O," thuirt e, "ma shnàmh thu, faodas tu dhol mach," thuirt e, "thairis. Bios thu a's a' mhuir."

'S bha e sin ag iarraidh mar -- dol a dhèanamh, dol a chur às dhan duin' aic'.

"Uill," thuirt i, "mus cuir si' es' mach, feumas thu bocsa a dhèanamh, bhios dìonach nach leig boinne uisg' staigh. Agus cuireas thu uisg' agus biadh staigh dha, ann a' shin, gus -- ma thèid e -- bhios am bocsa man a, mar a bhios e air flod, gheobh cuideigin e."

'Se seo a rinn e.

"Mur dèan thu sin," thuirt i, "cha tèid mis' gu bràthach cuide riut, mur dèan thu sin."

'S rinn e sin 's, thilg e sin 'bocsa agus an duin' thairis air a' bhàt' 's. Shnàmh, chuireadh na tuinn a-staigh gu, 'm bocsa gus a' chladach. Thàinig a' sin [pause] an cìobair a-bhàn,

's fhuair e, chunnaic e a' bocsa 's thug e staigh e 's bhris e e. 'S chunnaic e a' duin' ann, an Caimbeulach. 'S bha a' duin', bha e le, le feusag 's, le 'chuid fhèin salachar 's h-uile dad a bh'ann, bha ann a' [siod]. Thug e mach e 's ghlan e e, 's shèibhig e e. 'S rinn e a' duin' glan 's chuir e deis' aodach air. 'S dh'fholbh e. Thug e, dh'fhàg e 'n taigh, 's rinn e bodach baigeir dheth fhèin. Bha e [g iarraidh] obair. 'S thàinig e gus an taigh-sheinns' tha seo. 'S fhuair e obair -- ach fhuair i obair 's a' bhean, fhuair i obair a's an taigh-sheinns', bean a' Chaimbeulaich. Ach bha deis' an duin' aic' oirr', aodach an duin' aic' oirr'. 'S aon de na lathaichean, bha bean a' taigh-sheinns', bha i mach. 'S chunnaic i 'gill' seo, 's ghobh i taobh ris, 's bha i 'ga iarraidh air a dhol cuide ris.

"Cha tèid, cha tèid," thuirt e, "mis' cuide riut." Thuirt e, "Tha mis' cheart cho boirionn riut fhèin."

"Beil?" thuirt i.

"Tha."

'S char i sin staigh 's thuirt i dhan duin', "O," thuirt i, "feumas thu an duine sin chur air folbh. Dar char mis' mach an diugh, bha e 'dol a ghobhail brath orm."

"Robh?" thuirt e. "Robh e -- o, ma tha," thuirt e, "cuiridh sinn air folbh e. Bheir sinn a' rathad dha, [*unintell.*] ris bhith dol."

Thàinig a' fear a bha 'san taigh-sheinns' mach, 's dh'innis e seo ris a' ghill'.

"Uill, is neònach sin," thuirt an gill' ris. "Tha mis' cheart cho boirionn rithe fhèin. Thig, thig timcheall seo 's feuch mi dhut. Beil thu 'ga mo thuigsinn?"

Thug e dha a' t-sin 's, dh'fhosgail e shiobht.

"Bheil thu 'faicinn sin?" thuirt i.

"O tha, tha," thuirt e.

"Ach 'se is' bha ag iarraidh mis' sin dèanamh oirr'."

"O, uill," thuirt e.

Thàinig e 's, chuir e ann am baraille bìth i, baraille as fheàrr aig', 's chuir e maids ris 's leig e leatha, ri [*roilli*]<sup>1</sup> e 's, ròist e i.

'S thàinig nis bean a' Chaimbeulaich, bha i [...] às an sin ag obair, 's bha i ag obair air na h-eich aig, aig a' taigh-sheinns'. Ach aon oidhch' bha i staigh 's, chunnaic i an Caimbeulach 'tighinn nunn oirr' 's 'tighinn staigh, 's bha i a' glodanaich an aghaidh, 's thug i glodh mar seo.

"'Ne siod thu, 'Chaimbeulaich?' thuirt i ris.

Nis fhuair e fhèin 's i fhèin -- chuir iad sin fàilt' air a chèile.

"Ciamar a fhuair thu seo?" thuirt e.

"O," thuirt i, "thàinig mis', chuir mis' deis', do chuid fhèin aodach orm 's thàinig mi seo," thuirt i, " 'na mo bhaigeir, 's bha mi ag iarraidh obair, 's thug iad-s' dhomh e."

"Uill," thuirt i ris, "chan eil sinn an seo ach -- an dean thu marcachd?"

"Nì," thuirt e.

"Uill, ma thig thu a-màireach," thuirt i, "tha mise a's a' stàbull, 's gheobh mis' na h-eich," thuirt i, " 's ma mharcaicheas thu, gheobh sinn air folbh. Ach cuimhnich," thuirt i, "[ma thig iad 'nan dèidh, mur fhaigh]<sup>2</sup> sinn air folbh."

[*Pause.*]

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<sup>1</sup>*Roillig*: Gaelicisation of "to roll".

<sup>2</sup>Here the recording is very difficult to make out.

Fhuair iad na h-eich, 's fhuair i each dha-as. Char e marcachd air. Char i fhèin a' marcachd air an fhear eil, 's ghobh i galap<sup>3</sup> leis. 'S bha i 'sealltainn air a cùlaibh a' sin 's theireadh i, "Marcaich a bhaigeir. Marcaich a bhaigeir."

Ach, rinn iad a' gnothach, cha tàinig -- fhuair aid air folbh. 'S ghalaplaich iad gus a' deach aid air ais gus an dachaigh aca fhèin.

'S bha an Caimbeulach 's a' bhean aig' ann a' sin gus do, tug a' bàs leis aid.

Shin a'd nis stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich.

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<sup>3</sup>Gaelicisation: "gallop".

STÒIRIDH A' CHAIMBEULAICH

**Date:** 2 July 1994

**Collector:** Carol Zall

**B.S.:** Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** Aye. Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulach.

**C.Z.:** Uh huh.

**B.S.:** Campbell in Gael-- in the English.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Well, Campbell, Caimbeul and his wife --

**C.Z.:** 'Seadh --

**B.S.:** -- who were living together, they came -- A yacht came into the bay, a big yacht.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** And the captain came ashore. I'll tell it to you in Gaelic.

**C.Z.:** Aye.

**B.S.:** Thàinig a' captein, thàinig e gu tìr, 's char e gus a' taigh aig a' Chaimbeulach.

"O," thuirt e riuth', ris a' bhean agus ris a' duin', "thigibh staigh air a' *bhoat*, an t-soitheach agam, a' *yacht* agam a-nòchd."

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** "Tha bàl againne" -- *he was giving a ball* -- "tha bàl, tha danns' againn a's an t-soitheach. Agus, eh, bios oidhch' mhath againn."

**C.Z.:** 'Seadh.

**B.S.:** *He invited* e gus a-- chan e. 'S shin [...] a's a' bàt. 'S dar a char aid -- bha iad mach a's a' chuan, thionndainn a' caiptein, 's bha e glè bhronach. Agus, cha robh e 'ga iarraidh idir.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** 'Se a bhean a bha e ag iarraidh. Am bheil thu a' tuigsinn?

**C.Z.:** Tha, tha.

**B.S.:** 'Se a bhean a bha e ag iarraidh. 'S thuirt i, thuirt a' bhean ris, "Uill," thuirt i, bha a' sin, dar a fhuair e an duin' aic', an Caimbeulach -- bha iad dol 'ga ... thilg' a-mach air a' chliathaich e.

**C.Z.:** 'Seadh.

**B.S.:** "O fuirich, fuirich," thuirt i, "na dean sin. Dean bocsa fiodh. 'S nì thu dìonach e, nach leig e boinn' uisg' staigh. 'S cuireas thu biadh staigh dha, 's cuireas thu uisg' staigh dha, mus cuir thu mach air a' chu-- ann a' sin e."



"O nì," rinn e sin 's, thilg e mach e.

'S bha 'm bocsa 'flod', 'flodadh, bha e a' snàmh air uachdar an uisg', bha a' ghaoth 'sèideadh e. Thuirt i dh'fhaodadh, dh'fhaod' gu' rugadh cladaich an àiteigin e. 'S bha cìobair, bha e mach, 's chunnaic e 'm bocsa seo 's, chuir e a' chromag aig' 's, tharraing e a-staigh e.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** 'S dh'fhosgail e e 's fhuair e an Caimbeulach.

Agus, "O," thuirt a' duin', dh'innis a-nis an Caimbeulach dè thachair. Bha feusag air 's e salach 's. Thug a' duin' mach e 's ghlan e e.

"Tiugainn," thuirt e, "gus an taigh, an àird gus an taigh," thuirt e, "bheir mi do shèibheadh."<sup>1</sup> Bha feusag mhòr air.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Thug e e, ghlan e e, an toiseach a's a' [mhuir e] mas tug e an àird e, a' salachar aige fhèin dheth.

Thuirt a' duin', "Bios an t-acras ort 's, 'm faigh thu, 'm faigh thu biadh," thuirt e, "agus do lòn a'ad."

Thug e dhan an taigh aige fhèin e 's, thug e dha biadh 's ghlan e fhèin 's shèibhig<sup>2</sup> e.

Bha a-nis a' bhean aig a' Chaimbeulaich, bha is' leatha fhèin.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Agus. Cha robh duin' a' bhean far a' robh i, 's thuirt e rith' gu' d'fhuair es' an Caimbeulach ach. Thuirt e, "[Chan eil fhios a'm] dè dh'èirich' dha," thuirt e.

"Ach uill," thuirt i, " 's maith gu bheil e, gun tàinig e gu tìr co-dhiubh."

'S dh'fholbh is' agus chuir i deis' a' duin' aic' fhèin air. Chuir i an triubhas 's an t-seacaid 's rud'n aig a' duin' aic', 's dh'fholbh i 'na bodach baigeir. 'S thàinig i gus a' taigh-sheinns' bha seo. Agus fhuair i obair ann, airson bith 'na gill', air an stàbull.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Bha i a-nis 'na gille air a' stàbull, 's bha i ag obair air ais 's air adhart 's a-bhàn 's. Ach, bha, fear an taigh-sheinns', bha e pòsd', bha bean aige fhèin. Agus [pause] aon de na lathaichean thàinig a' bhean aig' fear an taigh-sheinns' mach.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Agus, eh, bha is' an dùil gur e, gur e balach a bha 'sa ghill'. Agus, dh'iarr i air a thighinn cuide rith'.

"Thug' a-staigh," thuirt i, "don an t-sabhal cuide rium."

"O cha tèid," thuirt a' balach, "cha tèid mi."

"O ma tha," thuirt i, "innsidh mis' dha dè rinn thu."

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<sup>1</sup>"*sèibheadh*": Gaelicism for "to shave".

<sup>2</sup>"*shèibhig*": "he shaved".

Char i air ais gus an duin' 's dh'innis i dha, "O, bha 'duin' tha sin, 'm baigeir tha sin, bha e 'dol a chur làimh orm 's bha e 'dol a dhèanamh [do thoil dha fhèin rium].

"An robh e 'dol a dhèanamh sin?"

"O, bha."

"Uill, uill," thuirt e, "cha bhì e nas fhaid' a' seo. Gheobh es' a' rathad thoir dha."

Thàinig e sin mach gus a' -- thàinig a' fear an taigh-sheinns' mach gus a' ghille agus thuirt e seo ris.

"Nis," thuirt a' gill', "cha tuirt mis' guth riamh rith' [... 's is'] a thuirt rium-as e."

"O chan e, chan e. Cha chanadh i sin, cha chanadh a' bhean agam-as sin."

"Tà, rinn i sin," thuirt i, thuirt am balach rith' (*sic*). "Tha mis' cheart cho boirionn 's a tha i fhèin. Thig timcheall seo 's feuch mi dhut."

Char e timcheall [troimhn an t-sabhal ud], dh'fhosgail e 'fhèin.

"Sheo a-nis," thuirt e, "tha mis' cheart cho boirionn ris a' bhean agad-as. 'Se bean a th'annam. Ach bha mi 'sealltainn [... geansaidh an duin' agam], 's chan eil e an seo.

'S char a' fear an taigh-sheinns' air ais, 's rug e air a', air a', air a', air a', air a' bhean aige fhèin, 's chuir e ann a' barail de bith i, 's chuir e tein' rith', 's leig e leath' dol bhàn an cnòc, 'na tein'.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** [...] Aon oidhch', och, fad' an dèidh sin, bha iad staigh 's bha, bha ceòl ac' a's an taigh-sheinns', a's a' *lounge*, 's bha iad a' gobhail dram. 'S chunnaic i am baigeir seo 'tighinn staigh. Thog i [glaodh ...] seo: "An e siod thu, 'Chaimbeulaich," thuirt i ris, "an e siod thu a' Chaimbeulaich?"

"O 'se," thuirt e. "An e sin thu?" -- e fhèin.

'S thàinig e 's chuir iad làmhan mun cuairt air a chèil' 's, fhuair i e. Shin 'n duin' aic',

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Agus, dh'innis e a-nis mar thachair dha, gun d'fhuair an duin' a bha seo e s' gun do ....

'S [ciamar a thàinig a' Caimb' air folbh dhith].

"Theab mi air folbh," thuirt e, "ged a [...]. Feuch faicinn thus'.

"O, ma tha," thuirt i, "fhuair thu mi. Ach fuirich," thuirt i, "madainn a-màireach. An dèan thu marcachd?"

"Nì," thuirt es'.

["Marcai' a gheobh thu. Marcai']. Uill," thuirt i, "bios dà each agam-as, dithis. Uill," thuirt i, "chan eil mis' a' seo. Ma chì iad sin thusa, cuireas iad stad orm-as."

"*All right*," thuirt a', thuirt an Caimbeulach rith', "biodh na h-eich a'ad-s' agus marcai' sinn. 'S gheobh sinn air folbh gus an dachaidh againn fhèin."

Ghobh iad an dà each aic'-eas a', an ath-mhadainn. Char iad a' marcachadh. Dh'fholbh is' air an each aice fhèin, 's bha i air toiseach air a' Chaimbeulach. Bheireadh i sùil air ais mar seo,

"Marcaich a bhaigeir, marcaich a bhaigeir," theireagadh i. "Marcaich a bhaigeir," na bu luaithe 's na bu luaithe.

Ach thàinig iad an sin gus an taigh aca fhèin 's, 's char an duin' bhàn gus a' chìob-- gus a' chìobair, 's thug e an àrd gus an taigh e, 's rinn e glè mhaith ris, bha e glè mheasail air, 's thug e dha -- thuirt e, "Mur am b'e thus', cha bhithinn-eas a' seo an diugh. 'S cha bhiodh is' ann."

'S bha an Caimbeulach 's a' bhean aig' air ais a-rithistich. Shin a'ad a-nis Stòiridh "Marcaich a Bhaigeir".

**C.Z.:** An e "Stòiridh Marcaich a Bhaigeir" a th'ann, no "Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulach" ?

**B.S.:** St-- uill, uill, "Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich" a tha i.

## STÒIRIDH A' CHÒCAIRE

**Date:** November 1973

**Collector:** David Clement

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 965**

[*Note: Recording breaks off before end of story.*]

Uill, bha rìgh òg na Fraing, agus a' bhàn-rìgh, 's bha an uair sin bhiodh iad 'cumail, eh, cailleach nan cearc, bean nan cearc. Agus, bha aid ann a' sin, 's cha robh fhios ac' dè bha iad 'dèanamh leoth', leoth'-fhèin le airgiod 's le biadh gu leòr aig a' rìgh 's aig a' bhàn-rìgh -- rìgh òg na Fraing 's. Agus -- ach, bha balach ann a' sin, bha e air a' rathad, 'sealltainn airson obair 's, agus thàinig e gus an taigh aig a' -- bean a' chearc, 's dh'fhoighnich e rith', am faigheadh e an oidhch' chur seachad.

"Och! faodaidh," thuirt a' bhean ris, "faod' tu an oidhch' chur seachad."

Agus, eh, nis bha e sin 'na shuidh' cuide rith' an oidhch' 's bha 'bhean ag inns' dha mu dhèidhinn a', eh, rìgh, 's bha nighean 'rìgh 'dol a phòsadh. Bha i 'dol a phòsadh eh, an còcaire.

Agus, "O," thuirt a' bhean ris, "na can an còcaire. Na can an còcaire idir -- rìgh òg na Fraing bhios ann."

Agus "Ooo," thuirt a' balach rith', "tha sin ceart gu leòr."

Ach, nis, 'sa mhadainn, dh'èirich 'balach 's, "Och, ma tha," thuirt e rith', "cha chreid mi, fuirichidh mi 'n diugh, 's thèid mi dh'iarraidh geinn de bhioran dhuì' dhen a' choill, nì tein' dhut."

Agus, bha an gille, bha e a's -- char e 'sa choill' 'tional na' bioran dha bean a' chearc, agus, chunnaic e nighean 'rìgh, 's i 'còineadh.

"Dè th'ort?" thuirt e rith'.

"O," thuirt i, "tha, eh, an duin' tha dol 'ga mo shàbhaladh 's -- tha fomhairean 'tighinn 'gam iarraidh-as," thuirt i, "agus 'se duin' bha 'dol 'ga mo shàbh-- an duin' tha mi 'dol a phòsadh," thuirt i, "bha e 'dol 'ga mo shàbhaladh-as. Seall e," thuirt i, "shin agad e. Tha e an àird a's a' chraobh."

Agus, "O!" thuirt a' balach rith', "chan eil fhios agam-as," thuirt e, "dè nì mi air do shon. Ach, cuiridh mi mo cheann air do ghlùinean, 's ma chaidileas mis'," thuirt e, "bheir thu liad bonn leth-chrun air mo cheann le aon beum dhen t-siosar. 'S dusgaidh sin mi."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"liad bonn leth-chrun": "the size of a half-crown coin." The princess is to wake the hero by using a pair of scissors to snip a small piece of flesh the size of a half-crown coin from the hero's head. Alan

Agus seo a bh'ann. Bha a' chail-- eh, 'chail' ann a' sin 's chaidil e s', ach chual' i [fuaim] 'tighinn 's 'se seo am fomhair. 'S thug i mach a' t-siosar á pòcaid 's thug i grèim air iomall a chinn. Dhùisg sin am balach 's leum e gu 'chasan, 's thàinig am fomhair. 'S bha aid 'dol mu' cuairt air a chèil' ann a' sin-ach. Smuainich a' balach gur e es' 'na [...] 's thog e 'chlaidheamh, 's sgud e an ceann deth. 'S dar a sgud e an ceann deth, thug e na sùilean mach às, agus an teangaidh, gheàrr e sin mach iad.

"Nis," thuirt e ris a' chaileag, "faodas thu dhol dhachaidh."

"O, faodaidh," thuirt i, "ach, eh, cò bhios 'ga mo shàbhaladh a-màireach?"

Thàinig sin an còcaire bhàn às a' chraobh, 's thug e ceann an fhomhair dhachaidh leis. Agus bha e glè sgèth dar a thàinig e. Thilg e an ceann a-staigh air a' rìgh. Och, bha 'rìgh cho pròiseil às a' duin' bha a nighean 'dol a phòsadh, nach robh fhios aig' dè dhèanadh e ris.

Ach air a' sin, an oidhch' sin seachad 's, làrna-mhàireach bha an aon rud a-rithist', bios 'tachairt. Agus, eh, char e ann an latha seo, 's thuirt e ris a' chail, "Nis," thuirt e, "caidilidh mis'," thuirt e, "agus dar a chluinneas thu am fomhair 'tighinn, bheir thu ceann na corraige beag dhiom, le aon beum siosar."

Agus, dar a thàinig a' fomhair 's dar chual' a' chail' a' tighinn e, thug i 'siosar á pòcaid 's, gheàrr i ceann na corraig' dheth, 's dh'èirich a' balach gu 'chasan 's, agus, eh, thàinig am fomhair. 'S ma bha a' chiad fear mòr, bha am fear seo, bha e 'dhà mhiad, 's bha dà cheann air. Ach char e fhèi' 's a' balach ri chèil', 's thug a' balach, bha e 'dol mu' cuairt air 's dol mu' cuairt air-ach, 's am fomhair. Bha na clachan bha fodh', fo an cuid casan, bha 'marbhadh an iasg a's a' chuan. Ach, eh, thug e sin an togail mhòr, eibhinn, aighearach dhan a' chlaidheamh aig', 's sgud e an dà cheann dheth. Agus, dar a rinn e sin chum e an claidheamh treis eadar -- ['cuinich] na [...] gus a' fuaraich' iad, mus toireadh e 'chlaidheamh air ais.<sup>2</sup> 'S thug e, mar

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Bruford (1969: 74-75) discusses this motif of a magic means of waking the hero in relation to *Eachtra Chonaill Ghulban*. According to Bruford, the motif is borrowed from the international tale types AT 300 and 303; he states that in Gaelic tales the usual means of waking the hero is by cutting a lock of hair, stealing a shoe, or taking some other object from him in order to make sure he can be recognised later in the story. Brian's story, however, has the princess cut some flesh from the hero's head, snip some flesh from his ear, and snip off the tip of his little finger. These differ from the "usual means" which Bruford lists (the lock of hair, the shoe, the taking of an object) but Bruford also mentions that in addition to these means "...a more primitive form is noted in the Aarne-Thompson index, and may be assumed to be well known in Europe: she [the princess] cuts or bites off one of his fingers, by whose absence he is later recognised." He goes on to mention that this occurs in two of the six versions of AT 303 in Campbell's *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* (1:72-104), in which versions the girl bites off a finger, takes a piece out of the hero's ear, and takes some flesh from his forehead -- the same actions as those used in Brian's versions of the story. Thus we have an interesting appearance of details which Bruford cites as being "more primitive" and less well-known than other elements in most Gaelic versions of AT 300/303. Bruford concludes that "It seems possible that this motif was once more widespread in Ireland and Scotland in AT 300/303, but has been replaced by other forms in the international tale because it became primarily associated with *Eachtra Conaill Ghulban*...." (1969: 74-75). Perhaps Brian's version reflects the earlier popularity of the older motif.

<sup>2</sup>Here Brian's speech is unclear. However, the action of the story is clear enough: the hero must keep his sword between the severed head and body of the slain giant until his marrow or blood congeals,



rinn e a' latha roimhne sin, an teangaidh a-mach às, 's thug, gheàrr e na sùilean às, 's chuir e ann an neapaic aid. 'S thug e dhachaidh aid. Och, dar a thàinig e dhachaidh, thuirt cailleach nan cearc ris, "O, bhròinein! Dè rinn thu air do lài--?"<sup>3</sup>

"Och," thuirt e, " gheàrr mi mo làimh le bioran."

Bha i a' sin 'cur -- a' bhean -- 'cur *bandage* air an làimh aig' 's 'ga dhotaireadh<sup>4</sup> suas.

Agus, "Ciamar fhuair an còcair' air adhart an diugh?" thuirt e.

"O isd! isd! isd!" thuirt i, "na bi ag ràdh a' chòcair' -- rìgh òg their thu ris, rìgh òg. Na can -- ma chluinneas -- chan eil math dhut bhith ag ràdh an còcair' ris."

O, 's bha sin bàl, gu bhith an's a' chaisteal an oidhch' sin. 'S bha na h-uile gin air na -- *inviteagadh* gus a' bhàl, ach am balach bha seo, 's thuirt a' chail' seo ris, "Carson," thuirt i, "nach tug si' leis am balach tha cuide ri, ri cailleach na' cearc? Nach eil es' -- "

-- Och, gheobh e, thig es' cuideachd."

Chaidh sin a h-uile gin a bh'ann gus a' bhàl 's bha bàl mòr aca, eibhinn, aighearach ann a' sin. Agus, eh, dar a bha -- bha a' sin cluichean ac'. Agus thug iad sin, eh, lurgann damh 'staigh, 's chuir aid air a' bhòrd e. 'S bha a-nis, thuirt a' rìgh riuth', "Nis," thuirt e, "shin agai' dhuil' cluich 'fhearaibh. Am fear a bhristeas an cnàimh."

Agus, eh, bha a' sin h-uile gin bh'ann dhe na firionnaich 'toir' buill' ach, bha aid, 'sann a bha aid 'ciùrradh a' dòrn. Ach thàinig e sin gu -- an triob aig a' chòcair' -- rìgh òg -- gu bhith 'dhèanamh.

Agus, "O," thuirt a' rìgh, "Och, cha ruig si' 'leas 'rìgh òg chur ris, dar a mharbh e na fomhairean, dè bhios an cnàimhean dha, bhristeadh?"

Ach thuis an còcair' a ghaoirdean 's, an àird cho fad' 's a b'urra dha 's, thug e [*daolong*]<sup>5</sup> air a' chnàimh damh bh'air a' bhòrd ach cha do bhris e an cnàimh ach chiùrr e 'làimh.

'S, "Oich! oich! oich! oich! oich! oich!" thuirt e. "Dhia 'se thu fhèin a bheir staigh na cluichean," thuirt e ris a' chail'.

"Cha rud b'e sin."

"Cha b'e," thuirt a' rìgh, a h-athair. "Cuiridh sinn mach."<sup>6</sup>

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lest he be resuscitated. Thus this sentence might be translated as: "And, when he did that he kept the sword a while between -- [congealing] the [?] until they cooled, before he took his sword away." Remaining between the slain enemy's body and his severed head until the marrow or blood cools is a known device in Gaelic stories. For an example, see J.G. McKay 1940: 41.

<sup>3</sup>Here Brian swallows the end of his sentence. However, it is most likely that the hen-wife (*Cailleach nan Cearc*) is asking the hero what he has done to his hand. This would be due to the fact that the princess has cut off the tip of the hero's little finger in order to wake him.

<sup>4</sup>Gaelicisation: "doctoring up".

<sup>5</sup>This word, seemingly meaning "a blow," appears in this story and in other stories in similar contexts, but I have not been able to identify it, despite consultation with others. I include it here in the hope that someone else may be able to recognise and identify it. I did ask Brian about it in July 1997 and he seemed to know the word as *dilong* or *daolong* and repeated it back to me. There is an Old Irish verb *Dlongid* meaning to split, cleave or cut away; perhaps the word in question is a derivative of this verb. See *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (1983: 220) for more details.

"O," thuirt i, "cha chuir. Tha aon neach ann nach do, nach do dh'fheuch fhathastaich e."  
Agus, "Och," thuirt a' balach, "dar a dh'fheuch aid uileag ris, dè 's fheàrrd mis' dhol ris?"  
"Och!" thuirt i, "feuch thus' ris. Tha do sheannas-as cho math ri fear eil'."

Ach thàinig a' sin 'm balach bha seo air adhairt 's, thog e 'dhòrn 's bhuail e an cnàimh. 'S dar a bhuail e an cnàimh, dh'fholbh an cnàimh 'na smàl. Chuir e 'na smàl air a' bhòrd e, 's bhris e 'bòrd cuide ris. Agus chaidh sin 'chail' gus a' bhalach 's thuirt i ris a' rìgh, a h-athair, "Cò," thuirt i ris, "shaoileadh sibh-s' a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean: am fear a bhris an cnàimh na am fear nach do bhris an cnàimh?"

"O uill," thuirt a' rìgh, "Cò tha --"

*[Here the recording ends and the continuation of the story is not to be found.]*

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<sup>6</sup>Here the syntax is confusing, but this does seem to be what Brian says.

## STÒIRIDH A' CHÒCAIRE

**Date:** 1974

**Collector:** Donald Archie MacDonald

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1974/27/B3 & 28/A1**

Eh, nighean a' rìgh, bha i 'dol a phòsadh 'n còcair', agus bha an còcair 'dol ga sàbhaladh bho, bho na fomhairean. Bha na fomhairean 'dol a thighinn, 'dol a thoir leis nighean 'rìgh bhuaith'. Agus, thàinig gill' a bha air a' rathad, thàinig e gu Cailleach nan Cearc, agus, eh, bha e 'fuireach cuide rith' 's.

Thuir e rith', "Tha mi 'cluinntinn," thuir e "gu bheil nighean a' rìgh agus an còcaire gu bhith, gu bheil iad 'dol a phòsadh."

"O isd, isd, isd!" thuir i ris. "Na bi ag-- na bi ag radh *an còcaire*' ris. Can '*rìgh òg* gu bhith th'ann."

"Och," thuir 'balach, "tha, tha mi creidsinn gur h-e, bheil sin ceart, gur e rìgh òg a bhios ann a chean'."<sup>1</sup>

Agus, eh, "Uill," thuir Cailleach nan Cearc ris, "màireach a' latha a tha an cò--, uh, '*rìgh òg* 'dol a shàbhaladh nighean a' rìgh bho na fomhairean."

Agus, thàinig sin a' latha 's thuir -- a' madainn 's thuir a' balach ri Cailleach nan Cearc, "Tha, tha mi 'faicinn," thuir e, "tha, tha feum tein' oirbh agus, thèid mis' dhan a' choill'," thuir e 's, "feuch' mi ri, ri maidean fhaighinn dhuibh airson tein' a dhèanamh."

"O bhithinn-- bithinn-eas glè thoilichte," thuir a' bhean.

'S chaidh e sin 's, dar a char e do 'choill', fhuair e, 'm boireann', a' chail' a bha seo, 's i 'na suidh', 's i 'còineadh.

Thuir a' gill' rith', "Gu de a th'ort?" thuir e.

"O dè -- tha mis' gu bhith air mo thoir air folbh," thuir i, "aig an fhomhair. Agus, eh, an duin' tha 'dol ga mo shàbhaladh, seall e," thuir i, "tha e an àird ann an craobh."

"Och uill," thuir a' balach rith', "cha dèan e do shàbhaladh bhon fhomhair, am bàrr na craoibh'. Ach co-dhiubh," thuir e rith', "gobhaidh mis' do leatrom an diugh," thuir e, "ach gobhadh a' rogha fear màireach e."<sup>2</sup> Agus nis," thuir e, "tha mi 'dol chur mo cheann air do gh'lùn, agus thèid mis'," thuir e, " 'tuit' mi 'na mo chadal. 'S a' rathad a dhùisgeas thu mis'," thuir e -- "bheil siosar agad?"

"Tha," thuir i.

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<sup>1</sup>*a cheana*: "indeed".

<sup>2</sup>"*gobhaidh mis' do leatrom an diugh ... ach gobhadh a' rogha fear màireach e*": "I'll take up your grievance today ... but let the best man take it up tomorrow."

"Uill," thuirt e, "bheir thu bàrr na cluais dhìom le aon beum dhen t-siosar."

"O glè mhath," thuirt a' chail'. "Nì mi sin," thuirt i.

Chuir e sin 'ceann air a glùn 's chaidil e. Dar a chuala a' chaileag a' fuaim 'tighinn, agus thug i sùil 's chunnaic i am fomhair mòr 'tighinn. 'S thug i siosar á pòcaid a h-aparan 's thug i mach e 's gheàrr i bàrr na cluais dheth, le aon beum dhen t-siosar. Dh'èirich e sin gu 'chasan, 's choinnich e fhèin 's a' fomhair ri chèil' 's, bha iad 'dol mu' cuairt air a chèil' ann a' sin-ach. Smaoinich a' balach air a chèil', air fhèin, gur e siod 'chiad treunad a's a' deach e 's, bu nàireach dha nan cailleadh es'. Thug e an togail mhòr, èibhinn, aighearach dhan fhomhair, chuir e air a dhruim e 's. Thug e mach a chladheamh 's sgud e an ceann deth. 'S dar a rinn e seo, thug e sin mach a' sgian aig' á 'phòcaid, 's gheàrr e an teangaidh 's gheàrr e na sùilean às, 's chuir e 'na neapaic iad.

Thàinig an sin, dar a dh'fholbh a' balach, thàinig an còcaire a-bhàn às a' chraobh, 's chuir e ceann an fhomhair air, air stob dhe maid', chuir e air a ghualainn e 's thug e dhachaidh e.

Thilg e staigh dhan a', dhan a' chaisteal, dhan rìgh e.

"Sheo," thuirt e.

Och, bha an rìgh cho proiseil às, às an duin' bha a nighean 'dol a phòsadh, cha robh fhios aig' de dhèanamh e ris.

Agus, eh. "Uis! uis!" thuirt e, " 's mi tha sgith."

"O, tha mi 'creidsinn gu' bheil," thuirt a' rìgh ris, "gu' bheil thu sgith, an obair a rinn thu ann a' shin."

Agus, eh, chaidh sin, dar a char a' balach, am balach, dhachaidh leis na maidean dhan a', Cailleach nan Cearc.

"O," thuirt i ris, "gheàrr thu--"

"Gheàrr," thuirt e, "gheàrr mi mo chluais, a's a' choill'," thuirt e.

"Och," thuirt i, "tha thu cianail."

Chuir i sin rudeigin air-s', 's rinn i na b'fheàrr e.

"Ciamar," thuirt e, "a fhuair an cocair' air adhart an diugh?"

"O isd! isd! isd! isd!" thuirt i, "na bi ag ràdh *an cocaire*. 'Rìgh òg, thàinig e dhachaidh," thuirt i, " 's ceann an fhomhair mhòir aig', air a ghualainn. Agus nis," thuirt i, "tha aon latha eil' agus, ma mharbhas e am fomhair tha 'tighinn màireach, bios e 'na rìgh òg, 's bios e fhèin 's, eh, nighean 'rìgh pòsd'."

Agus, eh. Ach dh'èirich an dearbh rud làrna-mhàireach. Bha am balach a's a' choill', 'tional na bioran airson tein', 's chunnaic e 'chail', bha i a's an aon àit' a's a robh i 'latha roimhne sin.

"Bheil thu ann a' seo an diugh a-rithist?"

"O," thuirt i, "tha mis' ann a' seo an diugh a-rithist," thuirt i, " 's tha mi a's an dearbh àit' 'san robh mi 'dè," thuirt i. "Tha an duin' 'tha 'dol ga mo, mo shàbhaladh, tha e a's a' chraobh mar bha e an dè."

"Och uill," thuirt e rith', "feuchaidh mis' a' rud as fheàrr a's urrainn mi dhèanamh air do shon 'n diugh."

'S chuir e sin ceann air a glùn 's, char e chadal.

"Dè 's dùisg' thu an diugh?" thuirt i ri'.

Thuirt e, "Bàrr-- geàrras thu bàrr na, na corraige big' dhìom, le aon beum dhen t-siosar agad."

Dar a chaidil e sin 's, dar a thàinig am fomhair, 's dar chual' a' chail' a' tighinn e, thug i mach a' siosar á pòcaid, 's thug i bàrr na ludag dheth. Dh'èirich a' sin 'balach gu chas' 's a chunnaic e a' fear seo. [An] àite aon cheann air, bha dà cheann air.

"O mo chreach!" thuirt e, " 'se fear mòr tha seo," thuirt e 's, "tha dà cheann air."

Ach, ghobh iad sin dha chèil', grèimean a chèil' e fhèin 's a' balach 's. Bha na clachan bha 'folbh fo' casan, bha 'marbhadh na h-iasgan a's na h-aibhnichean. Ach thug e sin, smaoinich e air fhèin 's thug e an togail ud dha, chuir e 'fomhair ri talamh 's, thug e mach a chladheamh 's sgud e na cinn dheth. 'S dar rinn e seo thug e mach a sgian 's mar a rinn e 'latha roimhne sin, gheàrr e an teangaidh agus na sùilean às. Thug e sin, 's chuir e 'na neapaic-pòcaid iad. 'S dar a rinn e seo thàinig a' sin an còcair' bhàn às a' chraobh, 's thog e an ceann, 's chuir e air a ghualainn e. Thug e dhachaidh gu caisteal a' rìgh aid.

Bhuail e 's "Shin agai'," thuirt e, "ceann an fhear bho dheireadh dhiubh."

Och, bha a' rìgh cianail toilichit<sup>3</sup> às, char sin bàl mòr chumail an oidhch' sin. 'S bha na h-uile gin bh'air an oighreachd a's a' bhàl. Agus, eh, bha a' balach bha seo ann.

'S nis, bha danns', ceòl 's, deoch gu leòr ac'. 'S dh'èirich a' chail' 's thuirt i, "O tha mi 'faicinn balach ann a' seo," thuirt i, "gill' strainnsear a th'ann," thuirt i, " 's chan eil, chan eil dad aig' a's a' ghloin' aig'."

Thog i gloin' 's, chuir i deoch ann dha 's, char i null ris 's dar bha i 'dol a-null thug i fàinn' dhe 'corrag, 's chuir i a's a' ghloin' e. 'S dar a dh'òl es' an deoch, thog e a' fàinn' 's chuir e a' fàinn' air a lùdag.

'S thuirt a h-àthair rith', "Carson a rinn thu sin?" thuirt e.

"Dè rud?" thuirt i.

Thuirt i (*sic*), "Thug thu dha-as deoch, 's chuir e, chuir thu fàinn' ann 's chuir es' air a lùdag e."

"Och," thuirt i, "cha d'rinn ach airson dìreach dibhearsan dhomh fhèin." Agus, "Nis," thuirt i, dar bha na h-uile dad seachad, "tha mi 'dol thoir staigh cluich bhreàgha geam<sup>4</sup> dhui' ann a' seo."

'S dh'iarr i orr' cnàimh lurgainn damh thoir staigh. Thug i staigh e 's chuir i air a' bhòrd e.

<sup>3</sup>An instance of B.S.'s form of *toilichte* ("pleased") occurring as *toilichit*. This form occurs a number of times in the recordings.

<sup>4</sup>Gaelicisation: "game".



"Nis, 'fhearaibh," thuirt i, "shin agai' geam dhui'. Cò agai' bhristeas an cnàimh tha sin?"

Dh'fheuch na h-uile duin' a bha sin, ri buill' thoir air a' chnàimh ach, bha an cnàimh riamh air a' bhòrd, 's cha do bhris *one* e [B.S. *pauses while inhaling from pipe*] gus an tàinig e timchioll gus a' chòcaire. Agus char ann a' shin iarraidh air a' chòcaire. Thruis an còcaire a ghaoirdean an àird 's, thog e a dhòrn, 's thug e an aon [daolong] ud air a' chnàimh, 's dar a thug, 'sann a chiurr e [B.S. *laughs*] chiùrr e a dhòrn.

"Oich! Oich! Oich! Oich! Oich! Oich! Oich!" thuirt e rith'. " 'Se thu fhèin bheir a-staigh na cluichean," thuirt e.

"Uill, abair e," thuirt a h-àthair, 'rìgh. "Sin ort e."

"O, dà," thuirt i, "fuirichibh. Tha gill' ann a' seo nach do ... dh'fheuch fhathast e. Agus strainnsear ann a' seo 's cha do dh'fheu--"

"Och," thuirt am balach rith', "dè 's fheàrrde dhomh-as a dh'fheuchainn?" thuirt e.

"Dh'fheuch aid uileag e 's, dh'fheuch a' rìgh òg e 's, am fear ... gu bhith," thuirt es', "am fear a mharbh na fomhairean nach brist an cnà--"

"Och, feuch thus' e. Feuch thus' buill' air."

"Och, ma tha," thuirt e, "airson do thoileachdainn, bheir mis' buill' air cuideachd."

'S thog e 'dhòrn 's thug e [daolong] air a' chnàimh 's, chuir e an cnàimh 'na sgonn air a' bhòrd, 's dh'fhòlbh na ceithir casan bhon a' bhòrd. Bhris e na ceithir casan. Agus thug a' sin nighean 'rìgh sùil air a h-àthair.

"Nis," thuirt i ri h-àthair, "cò chreideadh sibh-s' an duin' a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean? An duin' a bhris an cnàimh, no am fear nach do bhris an cnàimh?"

"O uill," thuirt a' rìgh rith', "theirinn," thuirt e, "gur e an duin' a bhris an cnàimh agus a bhris na casan bhon a' bhòrd, an duin' a dhèanadh sin. Ach ciamar-- nach e an c--, nach e 'rìgh òg, eh, gu bhith, shàbhail thu?"

"Chan e," thuirt i. "Bha si' 'foighneachd dhiom-as," thuirt i, "carson a chuir mi a' fàinn' bho mo chorrage a's a' deoch aig a' bhalach seo. Shin a'ad," thuirt i, "an duin' a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean. Agus 'se sin a' rìgh òg agus an duin' tha mis' 'dol a phòsadh." Thuirt i, "Am fear, an còcaire," thuirt i, "bha, bha 'dol ga mo shàbhaladh -- [During original recording, the reels were changed at this point. The recording continues on SA 1974/28/A1.] -- an còcaire bha 'dol ga mo shàbhaladh," thuirt i, " 'sann a bha es' am bàrr na craoibh'. Bha e 'streap an craobh. Agus shin a'd," thuirt i, "an cea-- na cinn thug es' dhachaidh dhui'. Robh si' 'sealltainn orr'?" thuirt i ri h-àthair. "Chan eil sùilean 's chan eil teangaidh annta."

"O gu dearbha," thuirt a h-àthair rith' nis, "cha do she--, cha tug mis' an àire dha sin."

"Uill," thuirt i, "seallaibh orr'." Dar a sheall aid cha robh sùil, 's cha robh teangaidh annta.

"Nis," thuirt i ri' a' bhalach, "trobhad. Cuir do neapaic air a' bhòrd air 'bheulaibh, 's cuir mach na rudan a th'a'd 'na do phòcaidean, na sùilean, agus na teangaidhean."

'S chuir e, bha e 'sgaoil' an sin an neapaic air a' bhòrd 's, bha na sùilean 's na teangaidhean a' seo.

"Gu dearbha fhèin," thuirt a' rìgh, h-athair, " 'se sin an fhirinn," thuirt e.

Agus thuirt i, "Mur b'e am balach seo," thuirt i, "bha mis' -- chan fhaiceadh sibh mis' tuillidh, bha mis' air mo thoir air folbh aig na fomhairean. Agus 'se es' a shàbhail mi agus shin a' duin' agam-as," thuirt i.

" 'S dè tha thu 'dèanamh leis a' chòc--?"

"O uill," thuirt i, "innsidh mi dhut dè tha mi 'dol dhèanamh leis a' chòcair," thuirt i. "Airson na rinn e orm-as," thuirt i, "tha mi 'dol a chur-- lìo-- lìonadh barail' de thàr. 'S tha mi 'dol a chur ann e, 's tha mi 'dol chur tein' ris. 'Se sin dhan a' chòcaire."

Chaidh iad beirsinn air 's char a chur a's a' bharail', agus, eh, maids a chur ris, chur 'na tein', 's char an còcair' chur 'na thein' a's a' bharail'.

'S bha -- phòs am balach agus a' chail', nighean 'rìgh, 's bha e 'na rìgh òg air an oighreachd ann a' sin, 's chum e Cailleach nan Cearc, bha i riamh còmh-- "O," thuirt i, nis: "Mis'," thuirt i, " 'g ràdh gu' robh thu 'ga do gheàrradh fhèin a's a' choill' agus 'se seo bha 'ga do gheàrradh-as, dar a bha is' 'gad dhùsgadh le beum dhen t-siosar. Agus 'se thus'," thuirt i, "a' rìgh òg."

'S bha bànaid mhòr, mhòr ac' mhair, bha iad ag ràdh, latha agus seachd bliadhn'. [B.S. laughs.] Sin agad Stòridh a' Chòcaire dhut a-nis.

Date: 24 September 1993

Collector: Carol Zall

B.S.: Stòiridh a' Chòcaire.

C.Z.: Aye.

B.S.: Uill, a' rìgh, 's nighean, 's bha còcair' ac'. 'S bha an còcaire agus an nighean glè àraidh, 's bha an còcaire 'dol a phòsadh nighean 'rìgh.

Ach, thàinig gill' òg, bha e air a' rathad, thàinig e gu seann bhoireannach 's, agus eh, shìn e sin air tional bioran'n dhith, airson 'n tein' aic'.

Agus, thuirt e, "An cò--"

"O," thuirt i ris, "na can an còcair' ris. Chan eil math dhut 'n còcair' a ghràdh. A' rìgh òg, tha e dol a phòsadh nighean a' rìgh."

"O beil? O," thuirt e, "tha mi duilich."

Char e sin mach 's bha e cuide ris a' seann bhoireannach a bha seo 's. Ach, chunnaic e nighean 'rìgh. Thàinig i far a' robh e 's.

"'S tu, 's tus'," thuirt e, "tha a' dol a phòsadh 'n còcair'?"

"O tha iad ag ràdh sin [dhìom], gu bheil mi dol ga phòsadh. Ach chan eil fhios agam fhathastaich. "

'Se am fomhair, fear dhe na fomhairean 'dol ga toir leis.

"Seall," thuirt i, " 'm fear tha dol ga mo shàbhaladh, tha e an àird a's a' chraobh. [B.S. laughs.] Tha e an àird a's a' chraobh."

"Ach uill," thuirt e, chuir es' a cheann air a h-ultaich. "Nis," thuirt e, "ma chaidileas mi, thoir bàrr na cluais' dhìom, le aon beum siobar<sup>1</sup> agus bidh mi 'nam dhùisg. 'S chì mis' dè nì mi air do shon."

'S chaidil e 's rinn i a' rud a thuirt e, thug i mach a' siosar 's thug i beum á 'chluis, 's dhùisg e. 'S, eh, thàinig sin am fomhair, 's ghobh e fhèin 's am fomhair dha chèil', sìos 's suas, bha iad 'sabaìd. Ach thog e 'chlaidheamh 's, sgud e an ceann deth, dhen tomhair.<sup>2</sup> 'S dar a thug e an ceann deth, gheàrr e an teangaidh às, agus thug e mach na sùilean às, 's chuir e 'na neapaic aid. Uill thuirt nighean a' rìgh ris sin a dhèanamh, 's chuir e 'na neapaic iad 's chuir e 'na phòcaid e.

'S aon de na h-oidhcheanan thuirt nighean a' rìgh, rinn i bàl, 's bha i 'cur sin cuireadh dhan a h-uile gin a b'aithne dhith fhèin, 's chuir i cuireadh air a' ghill' seo.

<sup>1</sup>Here Brian says *siobar*, probably a slip of the tongue for *siosar* ("scissor").

<sup>2</sup>Here Brian substitutes initial /t/ for /f/, saying *tomhair* for *fomhair* ("giant"). In *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, he also substitutes initial /t/ for /f/, saying *tuasgail* for *fuasgail* ("loosen, untie").

'S thuirt a h-athair rith', "Carson chuir thu cuireadh air a', air a' bhalach seo?"

"O uill," thuirt i, "tha mi 'dol a thoir a-staigh geam dhoibh an dràdaich," thuirt i, "air a' bhòrd."

'S thug i staigh luirgean damh.

"Nis," thuirt i, "am fear a bhristeas an cnàimh tha sin air a' bhòrd, an cnàimh."

O, 'n còcair', thruis e 'ghaoirdean cho fad' 's a b'urr' dha, 's thug e aon bhuill' air.

"Oich, oich, oich, oich, oich, oich, oich! oich! oich!" thuirt e.

" 'S tu fhèin a bheireadh staigh-- Och," thuirt a h-athair, "carson thug thu sin dha?"

'S chiùrr e a' làmh eil' air.

'S thug a' gill' seo--

"O," thuirt i, "tha gille seo, cha do dh'fheuch e fhathastaich e, [...] <sup>3</sup> [gill' e]."

Thog es' a dhòrn 's chuir e an cnàimh 'na sgonn air a' bhòrd.

Thuirt i sin ri a h-athair, "Cò chreideadh si'," thuirt i, " am fear a mharbh --a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean, 'm fear a bhris an cnàimh, no am fear nach do bhris e?"

"O," thuirt a h-athair rith', "theirinn gur e 'm fear shin a bhris an cnàimh."

"O 'se," thuirt i.

"O, tà," thuirt i (*sic*), "nach tug, nach tug es' staigh, nach tug e na cinn aig' deth?"

"Bha," thuirt i, "cinn aig' deth. Càit' a' robh na teangaidhean 's na sùilean annta? Cinn gun theangaidhean, gun shùilean. Trobhad 'n seo," thuirt i ris. Thoir mach [] ás a' phòcaid aid."

Chuir e a' sin an neapaic air a' bhòrd 's bha na sùilean agus na teangaidhean 'sa, a's an neapaic.

"Shin agai'," thuirt i, " 'm fear a shàbhail mis'."

Agus phòs iad, nighean a' rìgh agus a' gill', 's bha aid glè thoili-- glè thoilichit cuideachd.

**C.Z.:** 'S dè thachair ris a' chòcaire?

**B.S.:** Uh huh.

**C.Z.:** Dè thachair ris a' chòcaire?

**B.S.:** O, char a' còcaire, char e, char a' rathad, char a -- fhuair e -- char [*kick*] chur a's a' cheann eil' aig' 's, char e chur mach. Airson bhith 'g inns' bhreugan, gur e es' a mharbh na fomhairean 's bha e 'dol dhachaigh na cinn gun shùilean [...] air a ghualainn.

**C.Z.:** Uill, bha sin math.

**B.S.:** Bha.

**C.Z.:** Stòiridh a' Chòcaire.

**B.S.:** 'S an sin, am balach a phòs nighean 'n rìgh, bha e fhèin 's a' nighean, a' bhean aig' cuideachd 's, bha iad 'na' laigh' oidhch', 's chual' e fuaim.

[*B.S. continues with Am Bodach Baigeir - See transcript of 24 September 1993.*]

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<sup>3</sup>Here Brian hesitates and stammers so that any transcription would be little more than a guess.

## STÒIRIDH A' CHÒCAIRE

**Date:** 18 September 1995

**Collector:** Carol Zall

**B.S.:** O bh'ann a' rìgh, rìgh òg agus, bha nighean, nighean aig'. 'S bha am fomhair 'dol a thighinn sin, iarr' an nighean. 'S cha robh fhios aig a' rìgh gu dè a dhèanadh e, nan d'rachadh a' nighean thoir leis, le fomhair. 'S bha, an gill' òg bha seo, bha e ... 'tional bideag [de] biorain a's a' choill'. 'S thàinig seanna bhoirionnach far a' robh e 's, "Dè tha thu 'dèanamh?" thuirt e.

"O, tha mis' ag iarraidh--" chan e, chan e, chan e. 'Se do gheàrr e a' làimh aig'. A' làimh.

'S thuirt i, thuirt an t-seann bhoirionnach ri', "Thig staigh," thuirt i, "cuiridh mi, cuiridh mi brèid air do làimh."

Thàinig e sin staigh 's, och, [] ghlan i a làimh 's chuir i *bandage* air 's. "Nis," thuirt i, "bios thu ceart gu leòr."

Agus, eh, "Dè seo," thuirt e, "tha mi 'cluinntinn mu dhèidhinn an còcair', 'dol a shàbhaladh nighean a' rìgh, bhon a' fomhair?"

"O," thuirt i ris, "na bi ag ràdh a' *chòcair*' ris, na bi ag ràdh a' *cho*--. 'Rìgh òg, bios e 'na rìgh òg, 'se es' a' rìgh. 'Rìgh òg."

Agus, "All right," thuirt a' balach, "cha chan mis' e, uill nis, cha chan mi 'n còcair' tuillidh. Bios e 'na rìgh òg, tha e 'dol a shàbhaladh nighean a', a' rìgh, air fear na fomhairean rithistì'. 'S aon de na lathaichean bha e 'sa choill' a-rithistich 's. Chunnaic e a' chail' seo, cail' bhrèagha.

Thuirt i ris -- dh'fhoighnich e rith', ghlaodhaich e oirr'-s', "Dè a th'ort?" thuirt e.

"O," thuirt i, dh'innis i dhith (*sic*). "Tha mi a' seo," thuirt i ris, "tha fomhair 'dol ga mo thoir leis. 'S tha an duin' tha e 'dol ga mo shàbhaladh, tha e an àird a's a' chraobh."

Thug e sùil 's bha an còcair' an àird 'sa chraobh. [*B.S. laughs.*]

"O, bha mis' [dìreach 'tighinn]," thuirt a' balach. "Uill," thuirt an gill' rith', "gobhaidh mis' do leatrom nochd, ach gobhadh a' rogha fear a-màireach e."

"O, m'òigridh --"

[*'S shìn e i 'na suidh'*]. 'S chuir e a cheann air glùn a', a' cail'. 'S thuit e a chadal.

Thuirt i ris, "Dè, ciamar a dhùisgeas mi thu?"

"Thoir bàrr na corraige big' dhiom le aon beum dhen t-siosar. 'S dùisgidh sin mi."



Agus shìn e 's bha e 'na chadal 's, chuir e a chea--, a' chail', bha fuaim 'tighinn, thug i mach a' siosar 's thug i bàrr na<sup>1</sup> -- dh'èirich e an àird, chunnaic e am fomhair. 'S ghobh e fhèin 's am fomhair le chèil' ann a' sin 's, ach leag, cuir e-- leag e e. 'S sgud e an ceann deth.

'S dar a thug e an ceann deth, thuirt a' chail' ris, "Nis, geàrr, geàrr an teangaidh às, thoir an teangaidh mach 's geàrr an teangaidh às. Agus thoir na sùilean às."

Thog e 'n sgian agus gheàrr e na sùilean mach às, às a cheann.

" 'S cuir iad an neapaic aid."

"Carson tha seo?"

"O," thuirt i, "cuir thus' ann a' sin, a' neapaic 'n dràs, cuir 'na do phòcaid iad. Inns' mi dhut carson tha sin rithistich."

O rinn e sin 's cuir e 'na phòcaid aid.

Agus an oidhch' seo bha bàl aig a', aig a', aig a', aig a' rìgh òg. Agus, thug e aon de na, na ... chuir e cuireadh air a h-uile gin a bh'ann. 'S char an gill' a bha seo, char a' cuireadh chur air-eas cuideachd. 'S thug nighean a' rìgh, bha ceòl 's aighearachd 's, thug i staigh cnàimh-- glùn dàmh, 's chuir i air a' bhòrd e.

"Nis," thuirt i, "tha mi dol a thoir chluich dhuì' ann a' seo. Cò bhristeas an cnàimh sin le dòrn?"

"O," thuirt a', a h-àthair, 'rìgh, "cò bhristeadh e," thuirt e, "ach an duin' a shàbhaileadh bho na fomhairean thu."

Thruis an còcaire a ghaoirdean an àird, thug e bhàn e -- "Huid! huid! huid! huid! huid! huid! huid!"

" 'Se thu fhèin," thuirt e "thug staigh na cluichean," thuirt a' rìgh. "Cò bha 'dol a bhris' an cnàimh?" thuirt e.

"O," thuirt i, "tha a' gille a' seo, cha do dh'fheuch e fhathastaich e."

"Och, dè 's fheairrd mis'," thuirt a' gille, "dol a dh'fheuchainn, dar a' fear a cu-- am fear a mharbh na fomhairean e. Carson tha mis', ciamar a [bhristeadh] e mis'?"

Ach thog am balach aon dhorn, 's thug e aon bhuill' às, chuir e an cnàimh 'na smùid air a', air a' bhòrd.

'S char i nis gu h-athair, a' chail', 's thuirt i ris, "Cò shaoileadh sì'," thuirt i, "am fear a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean? Am fear a bhris an cnàimh, no am fear a chiùrr a làimh?"

"O, shin," thuirt e, thuirt a' rìgh rith', gur e am fear a bhris an cnàimh.

"O," thuirt i, "tha sì' glè cheart. Shin an duin', am fear a shàbhail mis' bho na fomhairean."

"Och," thuirt e, "nach do mharbh a', a' rìgh òg, gun do shàbhail, nach tug e dhachaidh na cinn. Nach d'fhuair e [] na cinn aig'. O nach do gheàrr e na cinn diubh, le 'chlaidheamh aig'."

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<sup>1</sup>Here Brian rushes ahead to the next part of his sentence without finishing this phrase. The implication is that the complete phrase should read "*bàrr na corraige big' dheth*" ("the tip of his little finger off him").

"Gheàrr," thuirt i. "Robh sùilean ann 's robh teangaidh' annta? Seo," thuirt i ris a' bhalach, "thoir mach an neapaic á do phòcaid."

'S chuir e an sin mach sin 'bhois 's, bha an teangaidh 's na sùilean.

"Shin agai'," thuirt e. Thug e na sùilean.

"Sin agai' am fear a mharbh e 's, thug e na sùilean 's gheàrr e an teangaidh às. Shin agai'."

"Och, uill," thuirt a' rìgh, "tha e colach gur es' rithistich, bhios 'na duin' agus 'se th'a's a' rìgh òg."<sup>2</sup>

An sin thog i deoch dha-s', 's dar a bha i 'dèanamh, dèanamh deoch dha, chuir i a' fàinn' a's a', a's a' ghloin' 's. Dh'òl 'balach an deoch 's. Chuir e sin 'm fàinn' air a' chorràg. 'S phòs a' ... an gill' ... chui-- ... agus a', nighean a' rìgh.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm. Agus sin agad Stòiridh a' Chòcaire?

**B.S.:** Sin Stòiridh a' Chòcaire.

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<sup>2</sup>Here "*th'a's*" represents Brian's pronunciation of "*th'anns*". Thus the phrase is "'*se [a] th'anns a' rìgh òg*" -- "it' is he who is the young king" (i.e., it is he, rather than the usurping cook, who is the young king).

## STÒIRIDH AN EICH DHUIBH

**Date:** 1974

**Collector:** Donald Archie MacDonald

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1974/26/A1**

Uill Stòiridh 'Eich Dhuibh, 'se a bh'ann rìgh òg na h-Eireann, agus 'se bantrach dhuin' a bh'ann. Agus, eh, bha aon bhalach aig'. Agus, eh, bha a' balach, bha, bha e 'na ghill', bhiodh e eadar sia deug gu fichead na man sin 's dòch'. Ach sin phòs 'athair an dàrna triob. Bha nis, 'se s--, bha *stepmother* aig a', aig a', aig a' bhalach. Agus, eh, chuir i fios air, a' latha bha seo, gus a' chaistéal aic'-eas, chuir i fios air, air a' bhalach 's thàinig e s'.

Thuir i ris, "Chan fhac' mis' mòran dhiot riamh," thuir i, "ach na tha mi 'faicinn dhiot 'se balach glè ghasd' a th'annad agus tha mi glè measail ort. Agus, tha mi ag iarraidh prèusant thoir dhut."

"Och," thuir 'balach rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèusant dhuibh fhèin."

Agus, eh, thug i sin mach e 's, bha aid 'gobhail ceum timchioll an oighreachd, 's bha pàirc ann a' sin 's bha i làn de h-uile seòrs' each.

"Nis," thuir i, "each 'sam bith tha thu fhèin 'faicinn ann a' sin tha 'gobhail do shùil, 'se do chuid-eas e."

Agus bha am balach sin, bha e 'sealltainn orra 's, thàinig aon each dubh ann, 's thàinig an t-each an àird far robh e 's chuir e a bhus air a ghualainn.

"Och uill," thuir a' balach, "bhon a thàinig a' fear seo 's a chuir e 'cheann air mo ghualainn, bheir mi leis a' fear seo."

"O, glè cheart, glè mhath."

Fhuair e sin an t-each 's bha e, e fhèin 's an t-each air ais 's air adhart air an oighreachd ac'. Thàinig sin tìd' dha gu' robh a' smaoineachainn gu' fàgadh e. Agus thog e sin air 's, an t-each aig'-eas, 's e fhèin 's, dh'fholbh e. 'S bha e 'dol ann a' sin air 'rathad 's. Ach, eh, dar bha e 'dol, chunnaic e falt air a' rathad, falt boirionnach, cuailean falt boirionnach. Agus leum e dhe muin an eich 's, thog e 'falt, 's chuir e 'na phòcaid e.

Thuir an t-each ris, "Cuir-- fàg sin," thuir e, "fàg a' falt sin no gheobh e ann an trioblaid thu."

Thu' e sin sùil air an each 's thuir e, "Bheil bruidhinn agad-as?"

"O," thuir e, "tha an uibhir sin de bhruidhinn agam. 'S tha mis' ag inns' dhut," thuir e, "mur cuir thus' air folbh a' falt tha sin, gheobh thus' ann an trioblaid leis."

Ach cha do ghobh e *heed* dha, thug e leis a' falt, 's char e air muin an eich 's, chum e sin 'dol, gus an tàinig e gus a' chaisteal a bha seo, 's bha, bha e a' cluinntinn fuaim 's bàl a' dol, 's, thàinig e sin dhen an each 's, dh'fhoighnich e dè bha 'dol air adhart.

"O, seo a'ad taigh aig a' rìgh, agus, tha e 'cumail bàl 's, tha na h-uile h-aon air a' *inviteigeadh* gus a' bhàl 's, thig thus' staigh, ged is e strainnsear a th'annad."

Char e sin a-staigh 's, och bha e sin a's a' bhàl cuide riuth' 's, bha e 'dol mu' cuairt a's a ruidhl' air an ùrlar 's, thuit a' falt bha seo á phòcaid. Agus sheall a' rìgh, 's chuir e sin stad air a' bhàl, 's thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Tha mo chrosan 's mo gheasan," thuirt e ris, "trì buaraichean mathra sìdh nach stad oidhch' a's gach taigh dhut, gus a' faigh thus' dhomh-as am boirionnach bha 'caith' an fhalt a bha sin."

Agus, och, thàinig e sin mach a-rithist, char e gus an each 's bha e 'toir an fhalt 's an fheusag às fhèin 's,

"O thuirt mis' riut," ors an t-each dubh, "gu' faigheadh a' falt tha sin ann an dragh thu."

Agus, "Cà 'n tèid mis' a [dh'fhaighinn] an tè bha, am boirionnach a bha, eh, 'caith' an fhalt bha seo?"

Ach, chuir e sin diollaid aig' air an eich dhubh 's, thuirt an t-each dhubh, "Bheir mis' thu," thuirt e, "[ ] far a' beil i. Tha," thuirt e, " 'se nighean rìgh na Fraing th'innt', 's tha an caisteal ac' ann an eilean, ann a', a's a' chuan." Bha muir mun cuairt air.

Agus leum e sin air muin an each aig' 's ghobh an t-each, dar thàinig e gus a' chladach, ghobh e 'muir 's, shnàmh e gus an eilean. Agus, eh, dar a--

"Nìs," thuirt an t-each dubh ris, "dar thig thus' an àird gus a' chaisteal, bios thus' a' marcach' orm 's thig aid uileag mach, 's bios aid, bios nighean 'rìgh, bidh, bios i ag iarraidh marcach' orm-as. Agus diùlt a' chiad uair i. Na toir, na, na can rith' gu' faigh i air mo mhuin idir. Ach dar gheobh thu sin an t-òrdugh, gh-- gheobh mi air a' muin," thuirt e, " 's dar gheobh mis' a's an diollaid i," thuirt an t-each, "teichidh mis' leath', 's nì mis', eh, nì mi an cladach. Agus bi thus' aig a' chladach," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, " 's leum thus' air mo mhuin cuideachd, agus bheir mi an dithis agai' null gu tìr."

'Se seo a rinn e. Thàinig e sin 's bha e 'beuraigeadh<sup>1</sup> mu' cuairt air an oighreachd aig a' rìgh na Fraing 's. Agus, thàinig iad sin mach-- "O, nach brèagha an t-each a th'a'ad. Nach toir thu dhomh fhèin treiseag marcach' air?" Ach cha toireadh. Ach an sin, thàinig an sin nighean 'rìgh. 'S dh'fhoighnich i.

"Och," thuirt e, "cha toirinn-eas an t-each agam a ghin 'sam bith."

"Och, ud! ud!" thuirt i, " 's cinnteach gun toireadh thu dhomh-as treiseag dhe, dhèan' marcach' air."

"Och uill, uill," thuirt e. "Sheo, shin a'd agus, ri marcach'."

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<sup>1</sup>"*beuraigeadh*": a Gaelicisation meaning "bearing down on, circling around".

'S char e (*sic*) sin a mharcach' air 's. Ghobh an t-each a-nis ceum timchioll leatha mun cuairt an oighreachd, 's bha e 'cumail a shùil gus 'n do rinn am balach, a mhaighstir, gun d'rinn e an cladach dhe. 'S dar rinn e an cladach, a's na buinn thug an t-each dubh 's,<sup>2</sup> chan fhaigheadh i stad air-s'. Sin dar a fhuair e gus a' chladach, leum 'm balach air a mhuin 's, 's shnàmh e nis gu' an taobh eil'. 'S char e a-nis gus a' chaisteal leath' 's, thug e dhan a', dhan rìgh eil' i.

Agus o uill, nis, bha e nis ceart gu leòr, 's bha e ann a' sin airson treis a-nis, 's chùm aid air a', an oighreachd e 's. Ach latha dhe na lathaichean, thuirt a', nighean a' rìgh, ris, "Nis," thuirt i, "bhon a thug thu mis' seo, bios agad a-nis dhol air ais gus an eilean a-rithistich. 'S tha mis' ag iarraidh mo chìr, 's mo sgàthan" -- agus rudan a bhuineadh dhith a's a' chaisteal, aig a h-athair -- "agus," thuirt i, "a' lothag phrabach odhar agam fhèin."

"O," thuirt a' balach, "chan eil fhios agam-as," thuirt e, "ciamar tha mi 'dol a dh'fhaighinn sin dhut. Ma thèid mis' air ais gus an eilean a-rithistich, bios a', an ceann air a thoir dhiom-as."

"O uill," thuirt i, "mur toir thus' dhi--, mur tèid thu don an eilean, 's mur dèan thu sin, bheir mis' dhìot e."

Ach cha robh fhios aig' ach, bha e-- thàinig e agus dar a dh'innis e sin dhan an each dhubh a-rithistich, gum biodh e 'dol air ais rithistich.

"Ach uill," thuirt 't-each dubh, "chan eil againn ach feuchainn ris a-rithist."

Char e sin air a mhuin rithistich 's, char aid, shnàmh aid null gus an eilean rithistich.

"Nis," thuirt an t-each dubh, "dar ruig' sinn an cladach air an taobh eil' a's an eilean, thig thus' dhe mo mhuin, agus thèid mis' an àird timchioll an caisteal, 's dar chì iad mis', bios iad uileag 'na mo dhèidh, 'feuchainn ri mo mharbhadh airson gun do ghoid mi nighean 'rìgh. 'S bheir sin tìd' dhut-as a dhol a-staigh don a' chaisteal, agus a' sgàthan 's na rudan a bha, 's a' chìr 's na rudan a bha, eh, nighean 'rìgh 'g iarraidh, agus a' lothag phrabach odhar aic' fhaighinn. 'S thoir thus a-bhàn gus a' chladach i." 'S thuirt an t-each dubh ris, "Dar gheobh sinn gus a' chladach i," thuirt e, "chan eil i, chan eil i math air, air, a's an uisg', ach bheir mi, cuiridh mis' a's an uisg'."

Sin, dar a thàinig e gus an eilean co-dhiùbh, leum a' sin 'balach dhe druim an eich, 's ghobh a' t-each dubh 's fheaman an àird timchioll.

"O-o! Seo agai' an t-each dubh a ghoid nighean 'rìgh!"

Uileag as a dhèidh 'feuchainn ri grèim fhaighinn agus, och, chan fhaigheadh iad grèim air, bha e 'ruith sin 's bha e '*gallopaigeadh* a' seo 's, cha robh aid 'faighinn grèim air, gus an d'fhuair am balach na lothag phrabach odhar agus na rudan bha e ag iarraidh dhan a', dha nighean 'rìgh. Agus thug e sin gus a' chladach i, 's thàinig an t-each dubh air a' '*ghallop* air a chùlaibh, 's thug e aon teum as a' cheann-deiridh aic', 's char i mach air an uisg', 's chùm e roimh' i, gus do chuir e gus an tìr air an taobh thall i. Agus, ruig iad t-sin an caisteal aig rìgh

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<sup>2</sup>"a's na buinn thug an t-each dubh": "the black horse took to his heels," i.e. he set off at a gallop.



na Fraing (*sic*) agus, eh, nighean rìgh na h-Eireann (*sic*), bha e 'dol a phòsadh, uill, phòs iad. Agus, "Seo a-nis," thuirt e, "sin a'ad an loth' agad, 's sin a'ad 'sgàthan a'd, 's sin a'ad do chìr 's, na rudan."

"O," thuirt i, "mòran taing" dha.

Agus, eh, nis, thug iad nis, eh, àit' dha fhèin 's, bha e ann a' sin cuide riuth'. Ach latha dhe na lathaichean bha e mach 's, agus, eh, eh, thàinig an t-each dubh far a' robh e. Agus -- an t-each aige fhèin.

'S thuirt e ris, "Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "rinn mis' iomadach fàbhar dhut-as, thug mi á iomadach càs thu. 'S nis," thuirt e, "nì thus' *favour* dhomh-as." Thuirt e, "Nì thus' fàbhar dhomh-as," thuirt e.

"Och," thuirt 'balach, "rud 'sam bith, rud 'sam bith, nì mis' dhut. Chan eil nì air an t-saoghal nach dèan mis' dhut."

"Uill, ma tha, marbhas thu mis', agus," thuirt e, "dar a mharbhas thu mi, cuireas thu mo chnàimhean a's an fhuaran tha sin. Mo sheich agus mo chnàimhean," thuirt e, "cuireas thu bhàn a's an fhuaran."

"O," thuirt a' balach, "nì mi rud 'sam bith air an t-saoghal dhut-s' ach, chan -- cha mharbh mi thu."

"Uill, mur marbh thus' mis', marbhaidh mis' thus'."

Agus. Sin, cha robh 'n còrr aige ri dhèanamh ach, chuir e sin, mharbh e a' t-each, 's mar a thuirt e, 's bha e 'còineadh. Bha e 'còineadh airson an eich aig' 's, chuir e an sin an t-seich 's a', an còrr dheth a's an fhuaran.

'S làrna-màireach bha e mach aig an aon àit', 's bha e, bha e glè bhrònach airson an eich aig'.

'S thug e sin sùil air a chùlaibh 's, chunnaic e balach brèagha air a chùlaibh, 's thug e sùil.

"Carson," thuirt e, "tha thu 'còineadh?"

"O," thuirt e, "tha mi 'còineadh airson 'n eich a bh'agam. Agus, cha robh dad air an t-saoghal nach dèanadh e dhòmh-as 's nach dèanainn-eas air a shon-as, agus, bha agam ri 'mharbhadh agus, chur 'san fhuaran e."

"Och," thuirt a' balach ris, am fear seo ris, "nach gobhadh thu mi fhèin airson each?"

"Och," thuirt e, "tha thus' 'na do bhalach brèagha, gasd' ach, uh ... tha, chan eil thu an aon rud ris an each agam," thuirt e.

Ach chuir e sin bhàn a cheann, 's chuir e, thilg e, chuir e car dheth fhèi' 's, dh'èirich e, 's chrath e e fhèin. 'Se an t-each dubh a bh'ann a-rithistich. "An gobh thu nis mi?"

"O, mo Dhia," thuirt e, "gobhaidh mi a-nis thu. Gobhaidh, gobhaidh, gobhaidh, gobhaidh, gobhaidh."

Ach, eh, thionndaidh sin an t-each, "Uill," thuirt e, an t-each ris, "chan urra' dhomh-as bhith 'nam each tuillidh agad." Thuirt e, "Bha agam-as ri dhol tromh na càsan ud, airson gun

dèanainn seo dhut-as, agus dhèanadh thus' dhomh-as e. Agus, eh, nis," thuirt e, "bidh mis', chan urra' dhomh bhith 'nam each tuillidh ach, uh, bidh mi 'na mo, 'na mo dhuin'."

Agus, eh, "Och, uill," thuirt a' balach ris, "mas e sin mar a tha e, cha, chan urrainn a leasachainn 's."

Bha e fhèin 's an t-each ann a' sin, am balach ann a' sin, agus.

Ach dhèanamh stòiridh ghoiridh dheth, bha aig nighean a' rìgh ris an aona rud a dhèanamh air a' lothag phrabach odhar aic': 'marbhadh 's na cnàimhean aic' chur 'san fhuaran. Agus, dar a thàinig sin, 'se, 'se boirionnach a bh'innt'. Agus phòs i fhèin, phòs an lothag phrabach odhar agus an t-each dubh. Agus sin agai' ceann aig a' stòiridh, bha aid air an oighreachd, na h-uile h-aon diubh, air oighreachd a' rìgh. Chan eil, chan eil an còrr agam-as ri ghràdh ruibh a-nochd ach sin, dhen a' stòiridh sin. Sin a' deireadh.

## STÒIRIDH AN EICH DHUIBH

Date: May, 1974

Collector: David Clement

Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 954

*I'll announce it in English. This is about a black horse that's supposed to steal the king's daughter.*

Uill, rìgh òg na Fraing, agus, eh, bha aon mac aig'. Agus, eh, nis, phòs -- theirig a' bhean aig', agus phòs a' rìgh rithistich. Phòs e 'n darn' triob. Agus, bha sin am mac air an oighreachd aig' agus, thug a leas-mhàthair, thug i 'n [heir]<sup>1</sup> a-mach, agus thuirt i ris, "O uill," thuirt i, "cha tug mi prèusant riamh dhut."

"Och," thuirt a' leas-mhac rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèusant riamh dhuibh fhèin."

"O uill," thuirt i, "tha mi 'dol a thoir a-staigh don a' phàirc tha seo thu, agus tha mòran each ann. Agus tagh thus' an t-each as toigh leat fhèin, 's thoir leat e, 'se do chuid-s' e."

Char i fhèin 's a' balach dhan a' phàirc, agus, ah och, bha eich bhrèagh' ann 's. Ach co-dhiubh, thàinig a' t-each dubh bha seo, 's chuir e a bhus air gualainn a' ghill'. 'S thug an gill' sùil air 's, 'se each brèagha a bh'ann.

"Ach uill," thuirt e, "bhon a thàinig a' fear seo, 's dar a chuir e a bhus air mo ghualainn, gobhaidh mi a' fear seo ma tha sì' 'dol thoir dhomh fear."

"O," thuirt i, "glè mhath. Tha thu dì-beathtich."

Agus nis, bha a' tìd' 'dol seachad, bha e fhèin 's an t-each aig' 'marcachd na h-oighreachd air ais 's air adhairt. Latha seo, thàinig e staigh gu 'athair 's, thuirt e ris gu' robh e a' folbh. Agus, chuir e diollaid air an each dhubh 's, ghobh e fhèin 's an t-each dubh 'rathad. Bha iad 'dol air adhairt 's air adhairt ann a' sin. Ach dar a sheall -- chunnaic e cuailean falt boirionnach air a' rathad. Leum an gille dhe muin an eich agus, chuir e a' falt 'na phòcaid.

Thug an t-each dubh sùil air 's, thuirt e ris, "Fàg a' falt sin," thuirt e.

Thug a' gil-- am balach sùil air an each, thuirt e, "Beil bruidhinn agad-as?" thuirt e.

"Uill," thuirt e, "tha an uibhir sin dhe bhruidhinn agam." Thuirt e, "Tha mis' 'g inns' dhut-as a' falt sin fhàgail, na gheobh e ann an trioblaid thu."

Ach cha do ghobh 'm balach cluais dha, chuir e 'm falt 'na phòcaid, 's chum e 'dol. Thàinig e gus an àit' a bha seo 's bha -- chual' e [...] 's danns' 'dol air adhairt. Char e staigh 's bha bàl

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<sup>1</sup>It is possible that B.S. says *oighr* ("heir") here; however, he usually pronounces *oighre* differently.

mòr 'dol air adhairt. Agus, char a' balach staigh 's, 'sann a shìn e air danns' ann a' sin cuide riuth' 's. Shin a' -- dar a bha iad 'dol a's na ruidhleachan, nach do thuit a' falt á 'phòcaid.

'S thug a' rìgh bha seo sùil, 's thug e sùil air a' ghill, 's thuirt e ris, "Mo chrosan 's mo gheasan," thuirt e, "trì buaraichean mathr' sìdh, nach stad oidhch' a's gach taigh dhut-as gus a' faigh thus' dhomh-as a' boirionnach bha 'caith' an fhalt bha sin."

Och thàinig e sin mach, 's bha e 'tarraing an fhalt às fhèi' 's, bha e 'còineadh, 's thuirt e ri-- thuirt a' t-each dubh ris, "Nach do dh'innis mis' dhut," thuirt an t-each dubh, "gu' dèanadh a' falt trioblaid dhut?"

Agus: "Cà' bheil mis' 'dol a dh'fhaighinn a' boirionnach?"

"Ah, uill," thuirt a' t-each dubh ris, "bhon a fhuair thu ann a' seo thu fhèin," thuirt e, "leum air, air mo mhuin," thuirt e.

Leum e air muin an eich dhubh 's.

"Nis," thuirt an t-each dubh ris, "tha an t-àit' tha thus' ag iarraidh," thuirt e, "tha e ann an eilean," thuirt e. "Agus feumaidh sinn," thuirt e .... [*First side of recording ends. Continues with:*]

"Nis, dar ruigeas sinn an caisteal aig a' rìgh, bios thus' 'marcach' orm-as. Agus, dar a chì iad mis', bios aid -- nighean a' rìgh, ag iarraidh, eh, treiseag marcachd orm. 'S dhiùltas thus' dhith, 'chiad uair ach bios i -- 'Och,' thuirt i, 'nach toir thu dhomh fhèin treiseag dheth, dhen each dhubh?'<sup>2</sup> Agus sin, their thu rith', 'Uill, uill, ma tha. Sheo, shin a'ad treiseag dhut.' Agus dar gheobh mis' is' air mo mhuin, dèan thus' an cladach dheth. Agus bidh -- bidh mis' 'cumail mo shùil ort-as, agus dar, dar, dar chì mis' thus' aig a' chladach, teichidh mis' le nighean a' rìgh. Agus dar a gheobh sinn, dar a gheobh mis' leum, leumas thu sin air cùl -- air mo chùl -- air cùlaibh nighean a' rìgh."

'Se seo a bh'ann. Dar a ruig e an caisteal, bha aid uile 'g èigh' gu-- "O nach brèagha' an t-each a'ad. Nach toir thu dhomh fhèin treiseag marcachd air?"

"O cha toir," thuirt e. "Cha toir gin mi (*sic*) marcachd ach mi fhèin air."

"Och thoir [duinn], thoir thu dhuinn treiseag dheth."

"Uill, uill, ma tha. Thoir leis e."

Agus, chaidh i sin a' marcachd, chaidh nighean a' rìgh a' marc' air an each 's, bha an t-each dubh 'trot timchioll leatha cho brèagha 's cho bòidheach. 'S bha e 'cumail a shùil air a' bhalach gus robh e aig a' chladach. 'S dar chunnaic e sin ghobh e aig a' chladach, thug an t-each dubh leum 's, ghobh e às, 's a dh'aindeoin 's a dhèanadh nighean a' rìgh tarraing a' *rein* aig', cha b'urrainn dhith stad a chur air. 'S dar a ruig e an cladach, leum 'm balach air cùlaibh

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<sup>2</sup>Here the Black Horse tells the hero what the king's daughter will say to him when she asks to ride the horse. I have italicised the sections of rehearsed dialogue to make it easier for the reader to follow what is happening in the story.

nighean a' rìgh 's, ghobh an t-each dubh an t-uisg' leatha-s'. Ruig iad sin an caisteal, air an taobh thall.

"Seo a-nis," thuirt e ris, "shin agad a' boirionnach bha 'caith' an fhalt."

Agus, eh, "O, uill," thuirt a' rìgh, "tha sin glè mhath dhìot, gu' d'fhuair thu i."

Agus bha iad sin ann a' sin 's ach, aon de na lathaichean, thuirt nighean a' rìgh ris -- thug i glaodh air a' bhalach 's thuirt i ris -- 'Rìgh, nach deachadh i oidhch' gu bràthach a's an aon leabaidh ris mura fhaigheadh e dha-as (*sic*) a' lothag phrabach odhar aic', agus a' chìr, 's a' sgàthan, a bha taigh h-àthar. Agus, eh, thàinig sin 'n gill' mach 's dh'innis e dha, seo dhan each dhubh.

"Och, ma tha," thuirt 't-each dubh ris, "bios againn ri dhol don eilean a-rithistich. 'S cha bhi sin furasd'," thuirt e. Ach inns' mi dhut dè nì sinn," thuirt e. "Ma chì iad mis'," thuirt an t-each dubh, "bios iad, bidh mis' air mo mharbhadh, airson nighean a' rìgh a ghoid. Ach inns' mi dè nì thu. Dar a thèid thu gu tìr air an eilean, leumas thus' dhe, dhe mo mhuin, agus bidh mis'," thuirt e, " 'dol. 'S dar a chì iad mis', bios aid uileag gu lèir," thuirt e, " 'nam dhèidh. '*O-o-o, seo agai' 'n t-each dubh ghoid nighean 'rìgh.* 'S bios iad as mo dhèidh-as leis na boghachan saighead ac', 's leis na rudan agus, chan fhaigh iad greim orm-as," thuirt e. " 'S bheir sin tìd' dhut-as airson a' chìr, agus a' sgàthan, 's a' lothag aig a', aig a' bhoirionnach fhaighinn," thuirt e.

'Se seo a bh'ann, dar ruig e an caisteal, "O," thug iad glaodh [ ], "seo agai' 'n t-each dubh ghoid nighean a' rìgh."

'S bha na h-uile duin' bh'ann bh'air an oighreachd as dèidh an eich dhubh. Ach chan fhaigheadh iad greim air. 'S bha a' t-each dubh 'cumail timchioll an t-eilean air, 's 'earball air a ghualainn. Bha e 'cumail sùil air a' bhalach, ach fhuair a' sin 'balach a' loth', 's char e gus a' chladach leatha-s'. 'S chunnaic a' t-each dubh gu' robh e bhàn aig a', 'n uisg' leath', 's thàinig e le aon *ghallop* 's, thug e dìreach an teum ud ás an deireadh aic'. 'S leum a' loth' mach air an uisg', 's chum e roimhe i. Agus, chum e roimhe i gus a chuir e gus an taobh thall i.

"Sheo a-nis," thuirt e ri nighean 'rìgh, "shin a'ad a' loth' a'ad. 'S shin a'ad 'sgàthan a'ad 's shin a'ad a' chìr a bh'agad."

"O," thuirt i, "rinn thu glè mhath a bhalaich," thuirt i.

Agus, eh, nis, bha iad nis, thuirt a' rìgh ris ann a' sin ris, "Nis," thuirt e ris, "tha gu leòr obair dhut air an oighreachd ann a' seo," thuirt e 's. "Rinn thu rud dhomh-as," thuirt e, " 's, tha dachaidh 's àit' ann a' seo dhut."

Bha a' balach ann a' sin, e fhèin 's an t-each aig'-eas.

Ach a' latha seo, eh, thàinig an t-each dubh an àird far a' robh e.

'S thuirt e ris, "Nis," thuirt e, "rinn mis' fàbhar dhut-as, agus nis, nì thus' fear dhomh."

"O, nì, nì," thuirt a' balach, "nì mis' nì 'sam bith 's urra dhomh dhèanamh dhut."

"Uill, marbhas thu mis', agus cuireas thu mo chnàimhean a's an fhuaran agus."



"O Dhia bheannaich mi," thuirt a' balach. "Nì mis' h-uile dad tha fon a' ghrèin 's urra dhomh dhèanamh dhut, ach do mharbhadh, chan urrainn dhomh a dhèan'."

"Uill," thuirt an t-each dubh ris, "mur marbh thu mis', marbhaidh mis' thus'. Agus 'se sin as meas' dhut," thuirt e.

Ach an sin, mharbh a' balach a' t-each 's, chuir e a chnàimhean a's an fhuaran. 'S bha e sin mach h-uile latha, 's bha e 'dèanamh cumh' 's bròn airson an eich aig'. 'S chual' e rudeigin air a chùl a' latha a bha seo, 's thug e sùil 's chunnaic e firionnach brèagha 'tighinn far a' robh e.

'S thuirt e ris, "Dè tha 'tighinn riut?"

"Och," thuirt a' balach ris, "chan eil dad," thuirt e, "is urr' dhut-as a leigheas," thuirt e.

"Bha," thuirt e, "each agam-as, each dubh agam," thuirt e, " 's cha ghobhainn," thuirt e, "na bheil a dh'airgiod air an oighreachd aig a' rìgh air a shon. 'S bha agam ri 'mharbhadh," thuirt e, " 's a chnàimhean a chur 'san fhuaran tha sin."

"O uill," thuirt a', am firionnach, a' duin' bha seo ris, "tha mi glè dhuilich [airson] sin a chluinntinn," thuirt e.

'S char e sin-- chuir e sin a cheann air an talamh 's, thug e car dha fhèin. 'S dh'èirich e, 's chrath e e-fhèin.

"An gobh, 'n gobh thu nis mi?" thuirt e.

"O mo Dhia!" thuirt a' balach, "gobhaidh." 'S [ ] seo an t-each a bh'aig' air ais a-rithistich.

"Uill," thuirt a' t-each ris, "chan urrainn dhomh-as," thuirt e, eh, "bhith mar sin tuillidh. Bha mis'," thuirt e, "air mo chur fo gheasan. Agus, eh, gus a' dèanadh thus' agus mis'," thuirt e, "na h-uile dad bh'againn ri dhèanamh, dh'fheumainn-eas bhith 'nam each," thuirt e. "Agus 'se th'annam," thuirt e, "firionnach."

Agus, "Och uill, ma tha," thuirt a' balach, "ma 'se sin mar a tha," thuirt e, "tha mis' glè thoilichit thu bhith mar a tha thu."

'S nis, eh, bha aic'-eas ris an dearbh rud a dhèanamh air a' lothag phrabach odhar aic'. Bha aic' ri 'marbhadh 's a cnàimhean a chur 'san fhuaran. 'S bha is' dèanamh an dearbh rud, bha i 'dèanamh cumh' agus bròn airson a' lothag aic', dar a thàinig a' boirionnach bha seo far a' robh i.

'S thuirt i rith, "Nach gobh thu mi fhèin airson each?" thuirt i.

"O," thuirt i, "tha thus' 'na do bhoirionnach brèagha," thuirt i, "ach, cha bhiodh thu airson a' loth' agam-as."

Agus, thug i sin car dhith fhèin air an talamh, 's bheireadh i crath dhith fhèin. Dar a dh'èirich i, 'se seo 'lothag odhar a bh'aic'.

"An gobh thu nis mi?" thuirt i.

"O," thuirt i, "gobhaidh."

'S thuirt is' an dearbh rud 's a thuirt an t-each dubh: nach b'urrainn dhith-s' bhith mar sin, gur e, eh, cur fo gheasan 's a bha i, 's gur e boirionnach a bh'innt'.

Agus, eh, le sin thuirt i, "Chan urra dhomh bhith 'na mo loth' agad gu bràthach tuillidh."

"Och uill," thuirt i, "mur bi, chan eil -- chan urrainn," thuirt i, "an còrr a dhèanamh riut-s' ach sin."

Agus nis, thàinig an t-each dubh, dar bha e 'na ghill', agus a' loth' odhar -- 'se boirionnach a bh'innt'. Phòs a' t-each dubh agus a' loth' odhar. Agus phòs a' balach agus an tè a ghoid 'n t-each dubh, 's bha aid air oighreachd a' rìgh bha sin, bha aid shin. 'S chan fhios agam-as nach eil aid ann a' sin fhathastaich air an oighreachd.

Shin agad a-nis dhut ceann na stòiridh. [*B.S. laughs.*]

## STÒIRIDH AN EICH DHUIBH

**Date:** May 1978<sup>1</sup>

**Collector:** David Clement<sup>2</sup>

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 1006**

**D.C.:** Siuthadaibh.

**B.S.:** Once upon a time, there was a king and queen of Eireann, and the king, he was married -- twice, the second wife. And he had a son, to the first wife. And now the son was on the estate with the father and the stepmother, and when he came to be the age of twenty-one, his stepmother said to him that she was going to give him a present.

"Oh," he says, "I never gave yourself," he says, "any present."

"Oh *sios*, you're now twenty-one years of age, and I'm going to make you a present of any of my horses."

So, she took him in to the field, and there was plenty horses in the field, and he was looking at them and, this black horse, he came up to him and put his head on his shoulder.

And, eh, "Och, well," he said to the queen, "this one came and put his head on my shoulder," he says, "I think I'll take him, if it's all the same to you."

"Oh, yes, yes," she said.

So he took the horsie now, and, then he was leaving his father's, eh ... estate and, the queen there, and he was going to make for himself. And he got his horse and the saddle, and he got onto his back and, he started his journey. And, eh, going along the road on his way, he saw a bunch of a woman's hair on the road, and he alighted from his horse and picked up the hair and, woman's hair, and put it in his pocket.

And the horse turned around and told him, he says, "Don't have nothing to do with that hair," he says, "throw it away."

And he turned around, he said to the horse, "I didn't know that you could talk."

"Well," the horse said back to him, "I can talk that much, anyway." He says, "You get rid of that hair, or it'll get you into a lot of trouble."

"Och," he says, "a nonsense."

He put -- took the hair with him and, then they came to a place and there was a big gathering in it of people and, there was a dance going and he went in. And he was on the floor along

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<sup>1</sup>Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 1006 is contained in a box labelled "July, 1975". However, on the inside cover of the box it is written that Side A of the tape is from July 1975 and Side B is from May 1978. In the absence of any other evidence, it would appear that the recording dates from 1978, and I list it as such.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. John MacInnes was also present at the time of recording.

with them. And as he was dancing around the floor, this bunch of hair, lady's hair, fell out of his pocket. And that king, he saw the hair, and he looked at it, lifted it up, and he said to this young fellow, he says, where did he get the hair? So he told him.

"Well," he says, "I'm wanting the woman that was wearing that hair, and if you don't get it," he says, "you'll be headed."

Oh, now he came out to his horse and, he was taking the hair out of himself, and he said, the horse said, "What's wrong?" Oh, he told him. "Och," the horse said back to him, "I told you that hair would get you into trouble." But the horse said, "Get on my back."

And he got on the saddle again, and the horse took to the sea, and he swam across to an island, and, now that's where this lady was that was wearing this hair.

And, "Now," he said -- the horse said to him, "when we arrive at the castle," he says, "you'll be walking me around," he says, "sit on my back. And," he says, "this lady, this queen, this, em, king's daughter, she'll come out," he says, "and she'll be wanting a ride on my back," he says. "And you'll refuse, first, but eventually you'll let her have me. And you make for the shore yourself, and when I'll get the, this lady on my back, I'll make a circle round the castle, and when I'll get a circle round the castle then you be near the shore, I'll take off with it. And when I'll get to the, to the shore, you jump on my back behind her, and I'll take across the water."

And now, when they reached the castle, this is what they did.

*Thuir* i, "Oh, what a lovely animal you have, could I get a sail on his back?"

"Oh no," he says, "I can't."

"Oh, yes, surely. I'll no harm him."

And eventually, he let the ... to get on his back. And the black horse went round the king's castle with her and [quite the same again], all of a sudden when he was thinking that his master was near the water edge, he took off -- bolted -- and when he got -- came to him, where his master was, he stopped, and he got onto the back and the horse took across the sea, and swam to the other side, and then he delivered the lady to the king on the other side of the water.

"Now," he says, "that's your ... what you asked me for."

"Oh," he says, "that was grand now."

But then *she* turned round, the lady -- em, the queen's daughter that he stole from the island. She said, "You'll have to go back now," she says, "and you'll get my brush, and my comb, and my mirror" -- something like that description anyhow. "And," she says, "my dun filly."

And, och, he come out again and he was now saying to the horse, "How are we going to get this?"

"Well," the black horse said to him, "I told you," he says, "if you had left that bunch of hair," he says, "you were free to go and, as you please. But now, you have to fill all these promises."

And, uh. Anyhow he got on his back and he went back.

"Now," the black horse told him, "when we'll reach the castle on the island, eh, you get off my back, and when they see me coming, they'll all shout, '*Here's the black horse that stole the queen's -- eh, king's daughter.*' And they'll take after me and they'll be chasing me, and that'll gie you time to get down to the stable and get the dun filly."

And, uh. So that's what he did, as soon as he came, he jumped off the horse's back and the black horse paraded around the grounds on his own. And, "Oh! this is the black horse that stole the queen's -- the king's daughter." And, they were all chasing him, but they couldn't get a hold of him. And this young fellow, he went down to the stable and he got the dun filly, and the comb and brush, and whatever she wanted. And he got onto the filly's back, made for the sea. And then the black horse came behind her on his own on the gallop, and he took one bite out of her back end, and he put her oot on the water. He put her out on the water and, she started swimming to the other side. And, now, everything was all right, she, she got her, what she wanted, her horse and her comb and her brush and.

But, now, the black horse came to his master, and he said, "Now," he says, "I did a lot of favours to you, and you'll do one favour for me."

"Oh," he says, "yes, I'll do anything, anything in the world for you."

"Well," he says, "you'll kill me, and you'll put my bones, you'll put my bones in that well."

"Oh," says the fellow to him, "I'll do anything in the world bar to kill you." He says, "you're, you're too precious for me to kill you."

"Well," the black horse said to the king's son, he says, "If you don't kill me," he says, "I'll have to kill you."

"Och, well, yes, if that's the case."

He now killed his horse, and he did what he was told, put, put him in the well. And now he was grieving over his horse, that he lost his horse, and he would not take anything for him at all.

And, when he was grieving a young fellow came up to him.

He says, "What's wrong with you?"

"Oh, nothing," he says, "that you can help me with."

"Oh," he says, "I don't know. I might ... help you. What was it?"

"Oh," he says, "I had the -- the best horse, eh, that was in the world," he says, "and I had to kill him. And my best friend, too," he says. "I had to kill him and put him in -- he's in that well."

"Och," he says, "a horse. Would you not take me into your services?"



"Och," he says, "you're all right," he says, "but you're not, you're not the same to me as my black horse," he says.

"Aren't I now?" he says.

"No."

And then he lay down on the grass and he rolled himself over and when he got up and give himself a shook, here's the black horse.

"Oh," he says, "I'll take you on now," he said.

Oh, but he says, "I can't stay like that anymore." He says, "I was under a spell, and uh, I'll have to get back," he says, "to what I should be."

So, now, she -- the king-- the queen's daughter -- the king's daughter, she had to do the same with her dun filly. And, just the same thing, she had to kill her and put her in the well and, she turned out that she was a lady, and she came back as a lady and when she [gied it a roll] she was the dun filly again. And, uh, therefore, the black horse and the dun -- dun filly, as man and woman, they were joined together in holy monogamy, and they were man and wife. So that was the end of that story. [*B.S. laughs.*]

## STÒIRIDH AN EICH DHUIBH

**Date:** 15 April 1993

**Collector:** Carol Zall

[Recording begins with B.S. already speaking:]

**B.S.:**<sup>1</sup> ... a bh'ann, a' rìgh, agus a' bhàn-rìgh. 'S bha mac ac', mac ac'. 'S thug a' bhàn-rìgh -- bha i -- thug i mach a' balach, a' mac, thug i mach e, gus a' phairc. 'S bha na h-eich aic'.

"Nis," thuirt i ris, "seo," thuirt i, "prèusant bhuam-as, aon 'sam bith dhe na h-eich tha sin. Aon 'sam bith a thogras thu, thoir leis, 'sann leat-as a tha e."

"Och uill," thuirt e, am balach ris a' bhàn-rìgh, "cha tug mis' dad a-riamh, cha tug mis' prèusant dhuì' fhèin."

"Mo thogair," thuirt i.

'S, bha an t-each seo 'tighinn ach chuir -- each dubh, thàinig e 'na [...].<sup>2</sup> 'S chuir an t-each a ch-- a cheann air a ghualainn.

"Och uill," thuirt e ris a' bhàn-rìgh, "cum' mi a' fear seo, oir a chuir e 'cheann air mo ghualainn."

"O, ceart gu leòr," thuirt a' bhàn-rìgh.

Bha e nis ann a' sin, leis fhèin. Bha e 'sa [ghàrradh.] 'S thug e mach an t-each dubh 's chuir e diollaid air s', chuir e air a dhruim. Bha iad 'dol air adhairt a' rathad. 'S dè a chunnaic e air a' rathad ach, falt boirionnach. Fhuair e am falt. Thàinig e dhe muin 'eich, thàinig e dhe muin 'n eich dhuibh, 's thog e a' falt 's chuir e 'na phòcaid e.

Thuirt an t-each ris, "Nis," thuirt es', "cuimhnich -- cuireas thu 'falt sin air folbh, cui-- na tog, na cum sin. Tilg air folbh e."

"Och cha thilg," thuirt a' balach ris. "Chuir mi 'nam--"

"Uill, uill, mur thil', tha mis' ag inns' dhut, gheobh sin ann an dragh thu."

"Bheil thus' 'g ràdh sin? Bheil thus' 'bruidhinn?" thuirt e.

"Uill tha an uibhir sin de bhruidhinn agam," thuirt an t-each ris. "Tha fhios agam," thuirt e, "gu' faigh e thus' ann an dragh."

Ach cha do ghobh a' balach *heed* [dha], chuir e, chum e a' falt, 's char e sin 'marc' air an each 's, thàinig aid air adhart gu caisteal 's, bha danns' ann, a's a' chaisteal 's.

"Ach," thuirt 'balach, "tha mi staigh gus an danns'."

'S bha e a' danns' le aon de na caileagan. Thuit a' -- falt á phòcaid.

<sup>1</sup>Note there is some noise at the beginning of the recording caused by microphone movement. As a result the tape is unclear and difficult to understand for the first minute or two.

<sup>2</sup>The recording is obscured by noise here.

'S dar a thuit a' falt dhe 'phòcaid, thuirt a' rìgh ris, "O seall," thuirt e, "mura fhaigh thus' dhomh-as a' boirionnach bha a' caith' an fhalt sin, a thèid an ceann a thoir dhiot."

"Ah uill," thuirt a' balach ris. "Chan fheàrr mo cheann-as na ceann fear eil'."

Thàinig e sin mach gus a' stàbull 's bha e 'còineadh 's [...], "Dè a th'ort?" thuirt a' t-each dubh. "O, a bh-- nach thuirt mis' riut, nach thuirt mis' riut a' falt fhàgail?" Ach thuirt a' t-each dubh ris, "Ruith air mo mhui-- ruith a mharcachd orm."

Nis bha *strip* de mhuir eadar e fhèin agus an caisteal.

Thuirt e, "Snamhaidh mis' null gus a' taobh thall," thuirt e.

Shnàmh a' t-each dubh null gus an taobh thall, 's dar a ruig e an taobh thall, thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Nis, dar a thèid thu gus a' chaisteal, iarraidh nighean a' rìgh, '*O, nach bòidheach an t-each a th'agad. Am faod mis' dhol a mharcachd air?*' 'S their thu rith', '*O, cha tèid, cha tèid gin a mharc'* -- *dhol a' marcachd air, air an each ach mi,*' ach iarras i rithist e. Och uill, uill, ma tha, bheir thu dha i (sic). 'S suidhidh mis' is' air mo mhuin, dar a thèid is' a mharcachd orm, nighean a' rìgh, teichidh mis' leath'. Agus, thèid mi, snàmhaidh mi ... air ais gus an taobh thall mi."

Sin mar a bha e dar a ruig e an caisteal, char e mun cuairt air an (sic) caisteal, 's bha e a' marc' air an each.

Chunnaic e nighean a' rìgh, "O," thuirt i, "nach laghach an t-each a th'a'd. Nach fhaod mis' treiseag a mharcachd air?"

"O chan eil," thuirt e, "och, tha-a-a," thuirt e. "Sheo, ma tha, bi dol, ma tha."

Char i sin 'marcach', 's cho luath 's a fhuair i marcach', às a chuir an t-each dubh leath'. Theich an t-each dubh. Theich e leatha. 'S, 'shnàmh e null gus an taobh eil'. 'S thàinig e sin air ais a dh'iarraidh a' bhalach, 's thug e am balach null. Agus.

Thug e leis nighean 'rìgh, thug i sùil 's, dar a thàinig i, "Uill," thuirt a', nighean a' rìgh, thuirt i ris nis, dar a ruig e 'n taobh thall, leis a' bhean -- a' chail leis. "Nis," thuirt i, "cha tèid mis' a seo dhut, gus a' faigh thu a' loth' agam-as. Feumas thu a-nis dhol air ais a dh'iarraidh a' loth' agam-as. Agus mo chìr, agus a' sgàthan."

"O, 's ciamar tha mis' dol a dh'fhaighinn sin?"

"O, uill," thuirt i, "feumas thu fhaighinn."

Thuirt an t-each dubh ris a' bhalach, "Leig thus' leis," thuirt e, "gheobh sinn e. Thoir thus' mis' air ais gus a' chaisteal, leum, ruith [...] marc' orm a-rithistich."

Chaidh e an t-sin 'marcachd air.

"Nis," thuirt e, "dar a thèid mis' gus a' chaisteal, thig iad uile gu lèir mach, na h-uile gin tha sin," thuirt e, "bios iad 'nam-- '*O shiorraidh, sheo agai,*' '*t-each dubh a ghoid nighean a' rìgh. Seo an t-each dubh a ghoid nighean--*' 's bios iad 'ga mo ruith-as, ris a' chlachan. Ach chan fhaigh iad mis'. 'S bheir sin tìd' dhut," thuirt e, " 'loth' fhaighinn. Agus a dhol gus a' rùm aic', 's gheobh thu a' chìr 's a' sgàthan."

'S mar sin a bha e dar a char e, gus a, 's thug aid glaoth ris, "O sheo agai' 'n t-each dubh a ghoid nighean a' rìgh," as dèidh an eich dhubh a ghobh aid. 'S ghobh an t-each dubh air ais.  
" 'S dar a thèid thu [...]," thuirt e, "ruig thus' a' -- ruig thus' gus a' chladach leath', agus thig mis' air adhart air a' *ghallop*, 's bheir mis' teum às an deireadh aic', 's leumas sinn mach air an uisg' sin. 'S shnàmh thu gus an taobh thall."

Fhuair a' balach a' loth', lothag phrabach odhar, 's char e air a' druim sin e -- far a' robh [...] gus a' chladach. Bha e seo, ach chunnaic e 'n t-each dubh 'tighinn. Thàinig an t-each dubh 's bha iad shìos, thug e aon gòmag a's a' deireadh 's -- *phooh* -- chaidh i mach air an uisg'. Shnàmh i gus an taobh eil', 's fhuair a' chail' a' loth', a' loth' aic', 's char i a 'marcach' oirr', 's char i an àird gus an t-sabhal leath'.

"Nis," thuirt an t-each dubh, "ruith thus', eh, [a'] marc' orm 's thèid thu an àird."

"Uill, tha rudeigin eil' agam a dh'inns' dhut, fhathastaich."

"Dè tha thu 'dol dh'inns' dhomh a-nis?" thuirt a' balach ris an each dhubh.

"Uill," thuirt e, "tha," thuirt e, "seo," thuirt e. "Tha mis' fo gheasan, agus marbhas thu mis', feumas thu --"

"O, cha mharbh, cha mharbh mis' thus'," thuirt e. "Carson a tha mis' 'dol a mharbhadh thu?"

"Mur -- uill, mur marbhas thus' mis', marbhaidh mis' thus'. Agus," thuirt e, "dar a mharbhas thu mi, cuireas thu mo chnàimhean a's an fhuaran tha sin."

"Och, uill," thuirt a' balach, "chan eil mi ag iarraidh do mharbhadh," ach mharbh e an t-each dubh co-dhiubh. 'S thuit e mar a dh'iarr e, chuir e na cnàimhean a's an fhuaran. 'S làrna-mhàireach, thàinig e air ais gus aon àit', 's bha e ann a' sin 's, thàinig balach brèagha, brèagha far a' robh e. 'S bha es' ... a' gill' seo, bha e 'còineadh --

"Carson tha thu 'còineadh?"

Dh'innis e dha: "O," thuirt e, "each dubh agam, fhuair mi," thuirt e, "bho mo, bho mo mhàthair. Bho -- eh, bhon a' bhàn-rìgh. 'S bha agam ri 'mharbhadh," thuirt e 's, "thug e mis'," thuirt e, "á iomadach càs. Each dubh," thuirt e, " 's thug e mis' á iomadach càs, gu seo."

Sheall a' balach 's, cha -- thuit -- thàinig e bhàn gu 'ghlùn 's, *rollaig* e air an talamh, 's thilg e an àird 's chrath e e fhèin.

"Nach gobh thu mis'?" ars an t-each dubh.

"O, 'se balach brèagha a th'annad, ach [*pause*] cha, cha, cha, chan eil thu colt' ris an each a bh'agam-as. Ach 'se ba-- gille brèagha a th'annad."

'S a-nis, a' lotha' dhubh, phrabach, odhar, thug e leis dha nighean a' rìgh, bha aic' ris an ceana rud, bha aic'-eas ris 'marbhadh, 's na cnàimhean [aic'] chur 'san fhuaran. Agus an sin, bha is' glè dhuilich a marbhadh ach dh'fheumadh i dhèanamh, 's chuir i a cnàimhean 'san fhuaran. 'S thug i car dhith fhèin 's -- *rollaig* i fhèin air an talamh 's, dh'èirich i, 'se cail' bhrèagha a bh'innt'.

'S thàinig i air ais, "Carson tha thu 'còineadh?" thuirt i.

"O," thuirt i, " 'còin' airson a' loth' agam. Bha agam ri 'marbhadh [....]."

"A' faigh thu -- nach gobh thu mis'?"

"O, 'se boirionnach brèagha a th'annad," thuirt i, "[ach ... dè bha thu--] an loth' agam-as."

Ach, phòs an t-each dubh agus a' lothag phrabach odhar -- a' chail' agus a' balach, phòs aid.

'S bha aid 'fuireach ann an caisteal a' rìgh, 's shin a'ad Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Here the ending is somewhat confused. It is unclear whether B.S. means that the hero marries the king's daughter, or whether the phrase "*a' chail' agus a' balach*" refers to the two horses who have now been returned to human form.



## STÒIRIDH AN EICH DHUIBH

**Date: 30 October 1993**

**Collectors: Dr. John Shaw and Carol Zall**

*[The story is preceeded by conversation.]*

**B.S.:** Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh. ['Se] a bh'ann, a' rìgh 's a' bhàn-rìgh, 's bha gill' ac', bha bal-- mac ac'. Agus thuirt a' bhàn-rìgh ris' a' ma-- a' ghille, "Tha mi 'dol a thoir dhut prèusant 'n diugh," thuirt i.

"O," thuirt a' gill' rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèusant dhuibh fhèin."

" 'S dè tha sin?"

"Uill," thuirt i, "thig staigh ann a' seo."

Thug i mach e 's, 'toir gus a' phàirc e.

"Nis," thuirt i, "shin agad na h-eich ann a' sin, 's gobh do roghainn dhiubh, fear 'sam bith 's docha leat, 's toigh leat."

'S thàinig an t-each dubh, 's chuir e a cheann air a' ghualainn aig', 's [...].

"Ach, ma tha," thuirt e ris a' bhàn-rìgh, "cumaidh mi a' fear seo, oir a chuir e a cheann air mo ghualainn."

"*All right.*" Thuirt i biodh sin mar sin 's, bha e fhèi' 's an t-each dubh nis, 's char e sin air an oigh[reachd] bha seo, chuir e marcachd air an each, 's bha iad 'dol air adhairt a' rathad. 'S chunnaic e cuailean, falt air a' rathad, cuailean boirionnach, falt boirionnach. 'S thàinig e bhàn dhe mhuin an eich, 's chuir e a' falt 'na phòcaid.

Thionndain an t-each sin, "Uill," thuirt an t-each ris, 'n t-each dubh ris, "Tilg sin air folbh," thuirt e, "na gheobh e ann a' mòran dragh thu. A' falt sin."

"Ach," thuirt e s' chuir e [...] 'na phòcaid e. "Bheil bruidhinn agad-s'?"

"Tha an uibhir sin de bhruidhinn agam," thuirt an t-each ris. "Cuir thus' a' falt sin air folbh bhuaat."

Bha iad sin 'dol, e fhèin 's an t-each, 's bha e 'marcachd air, chual' e sin fuaime a's a' loids a bha seo 's. Bha bàl 'dol ann. 'S char e a-staidh, gus a' bhàl, 's bha e a' dawns'. 'S dar bha e a' dawns, thuit a', a' falt dhe 'phòcaid.

'S thuirt a' rìgh ris, "Seall," thuirt e ris, "mur fhaigh thus' a' boirionnach bha 'caith' an fhalt sin dhomh-as, bi-- bios do cheann diot. Gearraidh mi a' ceann diot."

'S thàinig e sin mach às an taigh 's, char e gus a' stàbull far robh 'n t-each dubh, 's bha e 'còineadh.

"O," thuirt mis' riut," thuirt a' t-each dubh, gu' dèanadh e sin ort."

"O, rinn," thuirt e.

"O [...]," thuirt a' t-each dubh ris, "ruith thus' 'marcachd orm-as, tha fhios agam-as cà' beil i. Cà' bheil a' boirionnach sin."

'S leum e sin air a' mhuir 's, bha e a' marcachd, char an t-each dubh [thairis], bha e cho math air a' mhuir 's a bha e air tìr. Shnàmh e null gus an taobh thall.

"Nis," thuirt a' t-each dubh, "thèid thu gus a' chaisteal tha seo, agus bios ... a' nighean a' rìgh ann a' seo, gobhas i *fancy* dhìom, 's bios i ag iarraidh -- '*Nach toir thu dhomh-as treiseag 'marcachd air an each dhubh agad?*' Agus dhiùlt thu, dhiùltas thu a' chiad triob i, diùlt' thu, their thu, '*O chan eil, cha toir.*' Ach a' sin, bheir thu dhith e, 's dar a gheobh mis' is' air mo dhruim, air mo mhuin, teichidh mis' leath', 's thèid mi null gus an taobh thall leath'."

Seo mar bha e, thàinig e gus a' chaisteal, 's bha e 'dol mun cuairt air a' chaisteal, e fhèin 's an t-each dubh 's e a' marcach'. O, bha aid uile 'sealltainn air an each dhubh, cho brèagha 's a bha e.

Thàinig a', nighean a' rìgh a-mach, 's thuirt i ris, bha a' gill' -- "O, nach toir thu dhomh-as treiseag air -- 'm faigh mi treiseag marcach' air an each dhubh agad, tha e cho brèagha?"

"O," thuirt e rith, "chan eil gin 'marc' an each dubh ach mi fhèin," thuirt e.

"Och, hud," thuirt i, "na bi mar sin. Chan eil mis' ag iarraidh ach greiseag air, dìreach air a dhruim, timcheall an caisteal."

"Och seo, ma tha."

Thàinig e dheth-eas, char i nis 'n àird, char nighean a' rìgh an àird air a', air an each, char i 'marcachd air. 'S cho luath 's a fhuair a', a fhuair an t-each dubh air a dhruim i, às a thug e leath'. 'S ruith -- theich e leath'-eas, char e null an cuan, gus an taobh eil' leath', gus an taobh eil', gus a' tìr. Agus, thàinig e sin air ais, 's thug e leis am ba-- thàinig e dh'iarraidh a' bhalach 's. 'S char e air ais leis.

"Seo," thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "shin a'ad nis falt a' bhoirionnach dhut."

Ach thuirt nighean a' rìgh ris, "Uill rinn thu sin," thuirt i, "cha stad oidhch' a's gach taigh dhut, gus am faigh thu dhomh-as mo sgàthan, 's mo chìr, agus a' lothag phrabach odhar agam. Feumas thu sin fhaighinn dhomh-as mas fhuirich mis' ann a' seo," thuirt i.

Ach sin a char e sin 'marcachd an eich dhuibh a-rithistich. Shnàmh aid air ais gu tìr.

"O," thuirt a' t-each dubh ris, "tha fhios agam cà' bheil i," thuirt e. "Ruith thus' air ais a' mharcachd orm-as [] a-rithisti. Agus dar a thèid thu nis gus a' chaisteal their aid, '*O-o-o, sheo agai', an t-each dubh a ghoid nighean a' rìgh.*' 'S bhios aid uileag 'na mo dhèidh-as, 'g iarraidh grèim orm. Agus bheir sin tìd' dhuts-as, a' lotha' aice, 'lothag odhar aic'-eas fhaighinn, agus tha is' math gu leòr dhut -- agus ruith thus' gus a' chladach leath', agus thig mis' air adhairt," thuirt e s', "bheir mis' beum às a', às a' deireadh, 's leumas i a-mach air an uisg' sin."

Seo a rinn iad, dar thàinig iad, bha e 'marc' air an each 's, "Ooo, *hey*, sheo agai' an t-each dubh a ghoid nighean a' rìgh!" As a dhèidh a ghobh aid. Bha iad as dèidh an eich dhubh.

Ach, thug an t-each dubh gus a' chladach i. 'S fhuair a-nis a' gill, fhuair e, a' lotha' aic, 's fhuair e a' sgàthan aic, 's fhuair e 'chìr aic'. 'S char e sin mach far a' robh aid 's, thàinig e gus a', far a' robh an t-each dubh. 'S thug an t-each dubh grèim às a' deireadh 's, leum i mach air an uisg' 's, shnàmh i gus an taobh thall.

Agus, "Sheo a-nis," thuirt e ri' an tè, "shin a'ad a-nis do lothag, agus do chìr, 's do sgàthan.

Ach aon de na lathaichean, bha a' gille mach, 's thàinig an t-each dubh no thàinig balach brèagha far a' robh e. O, balach brèagha, brèagha. Agus -- chan e, tha mis' --.<sup>1</sup> Thàinig an t-each dubh, thuirt an t-each dubh ris --

[Here a nurse enters the room and asks B.S. if he would like a cup of tea. Some conversation follows, after which B.S. tells the end of the story as follows:]

**B.S.:** Now, we can finish the story of the An t-Each Dubh.

**J.S.:** Okay, just a moment.

**B.S.:** Where did I stop now, where they ... the each dubh --

**C.Z.:** They came back --

**J.S.:** Bha, eh ...

**B.S.:** *The Each Dubh came to the gille, and he said, "Nis," thuirt e ris, "rinn mis' iomadach rud dhut-as, nì thus', nì thus' rud dhomh."*

*"O, rud 'sam bith, nì mi rud 'sam bith dhut-s'."*

**J.S.:** Dad ort, dad ort a-nisde. Uh --

**B.S.:** "Agus eh, marbhas thu mi," thuirt e.

**J.S.:** 'Seadh, thàinig -- ciamar a bh'ann, a-nisde? An tòisich sibh a-rithist air a' sin?

**B.S.:** *Pardon?*

**J.S.:** An tòisich sibh a-rithist air an sin? Dìreach, thàinig an t-each --

**B.S.:** Bha an gill' a-mach, bha am balach mach a' lath seo, 's thàinig an t-each dubh far a' robh e.

'S thuirt an t-each dubh ris, "Nis," thuirt an t-each dubh ris, "thug mis' thu á iomadach càs thu, 's rinn mi rudan dhut, nì thus' rud dhomh-as a-nis."

*"O, nì," thuirt a' gill' ris, "nì mi rud 'sam bith 's urra dhomh dhèanamh dhut, [...]."*

*"Marbhas tu mi. Agus cuireas thu mo chnàimhean a's an fhuaran tha sin."*

*"O," thuirt an gille, "cha mharbh, cha mharbh mi thu. Tha thu ro phrìseal dhomh-as [airson] do mharbhadh."*

*"Uill," thuirt e, "mur, mura marbh thus' mis', marbhaidh mis' thus'."*

'S rinn e sin nis ris, mharbh e e. 'S rinn e mar thuirt e, chuir e a chnàimhean a's an fhuaran.

Agus. [Pause.]

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<sup>1</sup>Here Brian starts to make a mistake in the running order of the story, but corrects himself in mid-sentence.

'S bha latha brèagha ann, 's bha e mach, 's bha e 'coiseach 's, chunnaic e a' gill 'n seo, 'tighinn an àird, gille brèagha, brèagha, 'tighinn an àird far a' robh e, 's dh'fhoighnich e ris: "Dè tha 'tighinn riut?" thuirt e.

Dh'innis e dha.

'S thilg 'gill' e fhèin bhàn air an, air an talamh, 's thug e car dha fhèin 's dh'èirich e an àird, 's chrath e e fhèin, "An gobh thu nis mi?"

"O gobhaidh, gobhaidh."

An t-each dubh, "O, an dà," thuirt e, "chan urra dhomh bhith 'nam each tuillidh," thuirt e.

"Bha mis' fo gheasan, agus gus a' dèanadh thu sin orm, dh'fheumadh sin [...], [chan urra dhomh ...]. Ach, bidh mi mar seo, bidh 'na mo ghille agad."

"Och uill," thuirt e, "cha toirinn-eas an t-each dubh agam air na chunna mi riamh," thuirt e ri' a' ghill, "ach, 'se gill' brèagha a th'annad fhèi'."

'S a-nis, nighean a' rìgh, 's a' lotha' aic'. Thuirt is' ris (*sic*), thàinig a' lothag far a' robh i 's thuirt a' lotha' rith' gum feumadh i an loth' a mharbhadh, 's na cnàimhean a chur 'san fhuaran, càit' a chuir an t-each dubh. Agus, rinn iad an sin an aon rud 's, 's thàinig a' sin boirionnach brèagha, brèagha far robh i.

Thuirt i rith'-s', "An gobh thu nis mi?" -- 'Se, bha i a-nis 'na lotha' a-rithistich, eh. Bha ...

"O," thuirt i, "gobhaidh. O," thuirt i ris [an aon rud a thuirt] an t-each dubh, "Chan urra dhomh-as bhith mar sin tuillidh." [*Pause.*]

Agus, eh, "'Se, tha mis' fo gheasan," thuirt e (*sic*), 's bha e agam ris a dhol troimh iomadh [] rud."

"Uill, uill, ma tha," thuirt i, "mar sin a biodh."

Agus. Nis, phòs nighean a' rìgh, agus, am balach a bha aig a' t-each dubh, 's bha aid cho, cho cridheil 's bha a' latha cho fad'.

**J.S.:** Ahh.

**B.S.:** Shin a'ad Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh, phòs an t-each dubh agus a' loth' phrabach odhar. 'Se-- bha is', bha i 'na boirionnach, 's bha esan 'na fhìreannach. As dèidh -- a thàinig riuth' an dèidh sin, chan urra dhomh-as dhol nas fhaid' na sin, chan eil fhios a'm dè dh'èirich dhoibh. Cha chual' mi 'còrr dhiubh.

GILLE NAN COCHULLA CRAICINN<sup>1</sup>

**Date:** 1958

**Collector:** Hamish Henderson

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1958/72 & 73**

**B.S.:** Uill, feuchaidh mi, cho fad' agus 's urra dhomh, 's na tha cuimhn' agam oirr', dhol troimhe i.

**H.H.:** Glè mhath.

**B.S.:** Bha rìgh òg na Fraing, bha e mach latha a's a' mhon', bha e aig a' sealg, agus, char e air chall. Thuit ceò 's, char e air chall. Cha dèanadh e 'dhachaidh dheth. Ach thàinig sin 'n oidhch', agus, chunnaic e solas. 'S dar a chunnaic e a' solas, lean e air an t-solas, gus do ruig e an taigh bha seo. Agus, dar a ruig e an taigh, ghnog e aig a' doras, thàinig cail' gus an doras, boirionnach òg, 's dh'innis e dhith gu' deach e air chall agus, a' faigheadh e bhith cuide rith' airson 'n oidhch'.

"O," thuirt i ris, "thig staigh."

'S dar char i a-staigh, bha -- 'se bh'ann an nighean agus a h-àthair, seann àthair. Uill, sin 'sa mhadainn dar a dh'èirich e, thuirt e ris a' chail' gu' biodh e 'dol dhachaidh gus an oighreachd aig' fhèin.

"O," thuirt an duin' nis, 'seann duin' nis, "mus fholbhas thu," thuirt e, baist thu do mhac."

"Ha-a," thuirt e, " 's neònach a' mac e, mas e mac aon oidhch' e."

"O a' dà," thuirt es' ris, "bha thu ann a' seo," thuirt es', "còrr 's bliadhn'. Agus baist thu do mhac."

Uill, rinn e sin, bhaist e sin a' mac, agus, thuirt iad ris, "Uill, bheil thu 'creidsinn 'rud tha mis' ag inns' dhut? Dar a thèid thu dhachaidh, gus a' taigh agad fhèin gus an oighreachd agad fhèin, tha an leanabh a dh'fhàg thu fhèin a's a' chreathaill, 'se a' chiad còmhla<sup>2</sup> dhut a's an doras. Agus an cuilean a bh'aig a' ghall, 'se a' chiad cù choinnicheas thu, dar thèid thu dhachaidh."

Uill, 'se seo a bh'ann, char es' dhachaidh 's, mar a thuirt b'fhìor. Dar a ruig e an taigh fhèin, an oighreachd aige fhèin, choinnich a' mac e, a's an doras. Bha e nuair sin bliadhn' -- dusan

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<sup>1</sup>Brian's form of the hero's name is highly unstable, occurring variously as *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, *Gille nan Cochlana Craicinn*, and *Gille na Cochull na Craicinn*. To avoid confusion, I have represented the name as *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* each time it appears. For some interesting discussion of this name, see Bruford 1969: 124, and 130 note 8 where he points out that "Giolla na gCroiceann" was also used as a pseudonym for other Fenian heroes.

<sup>2</sup>The word *còmhla* is also used in Alexander Stewart, Muir of Ord's version of this story (School of Scottish Studies recording SA 1955/124/A2). It must be related to *còmhdhalaiche*, "meeter, one who meets" (Dwelly).



na dhà bhliadhn' -- a's an doras. Agus chunnaic e an cuilean bh'aig a' ghall'. Ach thàinig e sin staigh 's, dh'innis e sin dhan a' bhean aig' fhèin mar a thachair 's, mar char leis, agus dh'innis e mu dhèidhinn a' ghiullan aig'.

"Och ma tha," thuirt a' bhean ris, " 's fheàrr dhut dhol," thuirt e (*sic*), "agus a' ghiullan a thoirt leat, a' seo," thuirt i.

Chaidh e sin air ais rithistich, a dh'iarraidh 'mhac, 's thug e leis e. 'S bha e sin aig', bha sin an dà ghiullan, aig an oighreachd aige fhèin, aig rìgh na Fraing. Agus, eh, dh'fhàs sin na giullanan mòr.

Agus bha aid aon latha, bha iad 'cluicheachd mach aig an doras. Agus cò thàinig seachad ach bodach baigeir. Agus, eh, sheall e air a' ghiullan', agus dh'fhoighnich cò leis a bha aid. Char a dh'innis dha, mac a' Rìgh a bh'annta.

"O," thuirt es', " 'se dà ghiullan brèagha aid, agus tha aid-s' measail air a chèile, ach ged is measail air a chèil' aid, marbhaidh 'n darma fear 'fear eil' diubh fhathast."

Ach, dèidh dhan a' bhaigeir dhol seachad, thuirt a', aon de, aon de na giullan', "Do chual' thu dè thuirt a' bodach baigeir?"

"O chuala," thuirt a' giullan.

"Uill," thuirt es', "nì mis' a' bodach baigeir breugach. Folbhaidh mis'."

Dh'fholbh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, agus thàinig e gus an oighreachd aig, eh -- Fionn, òg, agus fhuair e a' sin, bhith 'na ghille, air an oighreachd ann a' sin. 'S bha e mach cuide riuth' a's an fhèinn, 's a's a' mhon', 'sealg 's. Ach, na h-uile fear bha 'san Fhèinn bha 'togail sùil ris, bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'ga sgailceadh agus, 'ga marbhadh.

Ach char sin Fionn, dar chunnaic e seo, gu' robh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'cur às dhan daoine a bha 'san Fhèinn aig' mar seo, char e gu Cailleach nan Cearc, agus dh'innis e dhith.

"O," thuirt Cailleach nan Cearc, "feumas thu 'chur air folbh."

Agus thuirt i ris, "Cuir," thuirt i, "gu Eilean na' Fear Mòr e, dh'iarraidh 'Chòrn Leathraich.<sup>3</sup> Agus cha chreid mi," thuirt i, "dh'fhaod' nach tig e air ais á sin."

Chuir e sin, dh'iarr Fionn air Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, a dhol gu Eilean na' Fear Mòr, dh'iarraidh 'Chòrn Leathraich. Agus dar ruig, eh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn Eilean na' Fear Mòr, ghnog e aig a' doras aig a' chaisteal, agus dh'iarr e deoch. 'S dar a th-- char a' deoch thoir dha, 'se fhuair e baudhl falai',<sup>4</sup> cha robh uisg' no dad eil' ann.

<sup>3</sup>"An Còrn Leathraich": "The Leather (?) [Drinking] Horn"; see the note on this term in the September 1995 transcription of *Am Maraiche Màirneal*.

<sup>4</sup>"falai": used instead of "falamh," "empty". Dorian includes "falaimh" in a list of oblique forms which are used as nominatives and positives in East Sutherland Gaelic (1978: 170).

Agus thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, eh, " 'S neònach an deoch seo, ma 'se baidhl falai' tha mi 'faighinn."

"O [dh'iarr] thus' an deoch, deoch 'sam bith tha thu ag iarraidh, 's gheobh thu a's a' bhaudhl i."

Ach co-dhiubh, dè 'sam bith a' deoch a dh'iarr e, dh'iarr e i, 's dh'aithnich e sin gu dè bh'aig', gur e an Còrn Leathraich a bh'aig'.

Chuir Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn fo 'achlais e 's, thàinig e air ais gu Fionn leis.

"Sheo," thuirt e ris, "shin a'd nis," thuirt e, "do Chòrn Leathraich."

"Nis," thuirt e ris, "bios a'd," thuirt e, "dhol a leum a' staing mhòr, an aghaidh do chùlaibh 's an aghaidh do bheulaibh."<sup>5</sup>

Agus, 'se seo bh'ann. Char Gille nan Cochulla, chur, chur e, leum e a' staing mhòr. 'S bha aid-eas 'tilgeil na' biodagan air-eas, an aghaidh roinnibh,<sup>6</sup> 's bha es' 'gan tilgeil air ais orr', orra-s' an aghaidh basaibh.<sup>7</sup> 'S mar bha es' 'gan tilgeil air ais orra, na h-uile triob a thilgeadh aid e, air ais aid, bha e 'gam marbhadh uile.

'S chuir aid a' sin ruith ri Caoilt', ri aodann na beinne. Agus, bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha e nis sgìth dèidh bhith 'leum agus thighinn air ais á Eilean na' Fear Mòr, agus leig e--

"Bi thus' 'dol, a Chaoilt' bho chd," thuirt e, "gus an ceangail mis' mo bhròg."

Leig e le Caoilt' dhol gus a' d'fhuair e 'anail. Ruith e sin as dèidh Chaoilt' 's, bha slat aig' 'na phòcaid, 's thug e ghiog<sup>8</sup> air Caoilt' a-null na h-amhaich agus rinn e fiadh dheth. Sin, thàinig e sin dhachaidh, agus thill, char e dhachaidh gu 'mhàthair. Dh'fhàg e an Fhèinn 's char e dhachaidh gu 'mhàthair.

Agus, eh, bha sin a mhàthair ag ràdh ris na h-uile lath', "Och nach leig thu às, eh -- eh -- eh -- nach leig thu às, eh, Caoilt', dè a' dolaidh rinn e ort?"

Ach char e sin agus leig e Caoilt' às. Agus, eh, bha Caoilt', dar a thàinig e air ais gus an Fhèinneach, bha na h-uile gin 'beirsinn air 'làimh air.

<sup>5</sup>In an interview of 19 July 1997, B.S. explained that the "*staing mhòr*" is "...a big lochan of water." He then went on to say "*Staing. Staing mhòr*. And he was jumping it, you know, forward, and then he was jumping backwards, '*n aghaidh 'chùlaibh 's 'n aghaidh 'bheulaibh*.'" Here B.S. uses the phrase "*an aghaidh 'chùlaibh*" to mean "backwards" and "*an aghaidh 'bheulaibh*" to mean "forwards".

Interestingly, when Brian's uncle, Ailidh Dall, recorded an English version of the story in 1958, he explained that there was "a twenty-four or twenty-five foot wide river" and that *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* had to "... jump the river, frontways, backways and sideways" (SA 1958/75 B2 & 76/1).

<sup>6</sup>"*An aghaidh roinnibh*": "points forward." Thus: "And they were throwing the dirks at him, points [facing] forward."

<sup>7</sup>"*An aghaidh basaibh*": "handles forward." *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* catches the dirks by the pointed ends and throws them back again, hence the handles are facing forward. In Brian's own words, "he was throwing them with the butt end back [at them]" (19 July 1997).

<sup>8</sup>"*Ghiog*": Brian consistently uses this word to represent a sort of tap with a wand or stick.

"Ciamar a tha -- Dhia glèidh mi -- ciamar a tha thu, 'Chaoilt'? Ciamar a tha thu? Cait' robh thu?"

"Dhia beannaich mi, " thuirt Caoilt, "gu dè th'oirbh uileag? Cha robh mis' ach air folbh airson mionaidean."

'S bha Caoilt' na bliadhnaichean air folbh. Ach bha e 'na fhiadh agus, cha d'fhairich e 'n tìd' 'dol seachad.

Ach, latha dhe na lathaichean, 's tìd' dhe na tìdean, fhuair Fionn fios gu' biodh aig' a dhol gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc. Agus, chaidh e sin 's dh'innis e seo a-nis dha, dha Cailleach nan Cearc. "O ma tha," ars Cailleach nan Cearc, "tha feagal orm," thuirt i, " 'Fhionn," thuirt e (*sic*), "gu' feum thu tuillidh agus thu fhèin a dhol a' shin. Feumas," thuirt i, "Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn fhaighinn air ais."

"Ah uill," thuirt e, "chan eil fhios a'm an tig e nis, an dèidh, an dèidh [dhuinn] a chur air folbh, chan eil mi ag ràdh gu' tig e air ais, ach thèid sinn agus feuchaidh sinn."

Char e sin air lorg Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 's fhuair e e, 's dh'fhoighnich e an tig' e air ais gus an Fhèinndibh.

"O, cha tig," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn. "Bha mis' a'd mar tha, agus, chuir thu air folbh mi, agus le sin cha tig mi air ais tuillidh."

"Och thig, thig air ais, agus, bheir mi dhut cho àrd agus is urra dhut a dhol a's an Fhèinndibh."

"Uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ris, "ma bheir thu dhomh-as a bhith 'na mo stiùbhard air an Fhèinn, thig mi air ais. Ach mur toir, cha tèid."

"Gheobh," thuirt e, thuirt Fionn. "Thig thus' air ais agus gheobh thu bhith do, 'na do stiùbhard air an Fhèinn.

Thàinig e sin air ais, agus dh'innis e sin dha gu' robh aig' dhol gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc.

"O," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "thèid mis' dan a h-uile h-àit' air an t-saoghal cuide riut, ach gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc. Shin an aon àit' cha tèid mi."

Ach fo dheireadh, leig e air agus, bha e ag iarraidh air a dhol ann 's, mu dheireadh *decideig*<sup>9</sup> e gu' d'rach' e ann.

Ach thuirt e, "Mus tèid mis' ann, feumaidh mi òrdugh mo mhàthair fhaighinn. Agus ma thèid thu fhèin 's ma chì thu i, 's ma bheir i dhut òrdugh, thèid mis' ann. Ach cha tèid gus a' faigh mi a' t-òrdugh aic'-eas. "

" 'S cà' am faic mi do mhàthair?" thuirt Fionn.

"Chì thu 'sa mhadainn i," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "mus èirich a' ghrian, 'na suidh' air tolman uain' bhos cinn na mar', agus i 'cìreadh a ceann."

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<sup>9</sup>Gaelicisation: "he decided."

Dh'fholbh sin Fionn 's, rinn e mar a thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn. Fhuair e màthair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 'cìreadh 'ceann, mar a thuirt e, bhos cinn na mar'. 'S thàinig e glè shàmhach air a cùlaibh, agus rug e air fhalt oirr' 's.

Agus thuirt is' ris, "Leig às do ghrèim, 'Fhinn. Tha fhios a'm," thuirt i, "carson a thàinig thu. Ach an t-iarrtas sin, airson gun tàinig thus', cha toir mis' dhut gu bràthach e."

'Se seo, 'sann a theannaich e 'grèim na bu treas air an fhalt aic', 's ghoirtich e i.

"O leig às do ghrèim," thuirt i.

"Cha leig," thuirt es', "gus an toir thu dhomh m'iarrrtas."

Agus, "Uill," thuirt i, "leigidh mi le Gille nan Cochulla Craic' a dhol cuide riut, do na h-uile h-àit' air an t-saoghal, ach gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc."

"An dearbh àit'," thuirt es', "tha mis' ag iarraidh a dhol."

"O ma tha, cha tèid e sin."

Ach thug e sin fàsgadh eil' air an fhalt aic' 's, chiùrr e i 's. Ach fo dheireadh thug i dhà ... *consent* gu' -- gu' toireadh e -- gu' faigheadh e e.

Agus, eh, dh'fholbh e sin 's, chuir e 'bàt' an òrdugh, soitheach an òrdugh, 's chuir e gu muir i.

'S bha e sin 'seòladh gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc.

'S dar a thàinig e a' fianais an t-eilean, thug a' tè bha 'san eilean sùil mach às a' chaisteal aic', agus cheangail i na casan ac'-as ri *deck* a' t-soithich. 'S thug Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn sùil oirr'-eas, agus cheangail es' an amhaich aice ris an uinneag. Agus ruig iad t-sin 'n t-eilean.

'S dar a ruig iad an t-eilean, thuirt i ris, "Tuasgail do gheasan 'Fhinn."<sup>10</sup>

"Cha thuasgail," thuirt es'. "Tuasgail thus' iad mas tu as luaith' chuir iad."

Uill, thuasgail i sin aid 's, thàinig iad gu tìr.

Agus, thug Fionn sùil oirr'-s' 's, thuirt e rith', "Bhon a chuir thu cuireadh agus cuid oidhch' oirnn, feumas thu dachaidh thoir dhuinne, no taigh thoir dhuinn, gus a' fuirich sinn."

"O," thuirt i, "tha taigh ann a' sin-ach dhuì, dhuibh fhèin, ma thèid si' agus a ghlanas si' e, mach [e dhuì' fhèin]."

"Ruith, 'bhalachaibh," thuirt, eh, Fionn, "agus glanai' mach a' taigh nis."

Chaidh iad 'n sin, ghlan iad a' taigh, fhuair iad spaidean 's, o, *shovels*, 's bha na balaich 'dol a ghlanadh mach a' taigh. Ach na h-uile spaid bha aid-eas 'toir às, às an talamh, bha i 'dol air ais a-rithistich, bha i 'leum dhen a' spaid, 's bha i 'dol air ais a-rithistich. Ach thàinig iad sin mach, 's thuirt iad ri Fionn nach b'urra dhoibh-eas dad a dhèanamh leis an taigh, na h-uile spaid bheireadh aid às an talamh, gu' robh i 'dol air ais a-rithisti'.

Chuir sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn a sheacaid dheth, 's char e staigh 's, ghlan e mach an taigh.

Agus, "Nis," thuirt e riuth', "feumaidh sinn tein'."

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<sup>10</sup>Here Brian uses initial /t/ rather than /f/, saying *tuasgail* rather than *fuasgail* ("to loosen, untie").



Agus, thug es' ghlaodh air a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal, "O chuir thu cuireadh oirnn, 's cuid oidhch' -- càit' a' bheil an tein' againn?"

"O," thuirt i, "tha cruach mhòn' ann a' sin, 's thoiribh leis na thogras si' às."

Thuirt Fionn ris na [bala'n ...] na balaich dhol mach agus mòn' thoir às a' chruach. Char a' balach mach, agus na h-uile fòid mhòn' bha e 'toir às a' chruach, bha i 'bualadh air a's a' cheann, agus cha b'urr' dha fòid thoir' leis. Ach thàinig sin air Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn fhèi' dhol mach a-rithistich. Agus, char e gus a' chruach, agus bha fear beag ann a' sin agus ceann mòr air. Rug e air a' [...] 's sgailc e an ceann deth. Agus chuir e 'ghaoirdean staigh 'sa chruach 's, thug e leis na bha e ag iarraidh de mhòin'. Bha a' sin tein' air.

"Nis," thirt e ri tè na caisteil, "bho chuir thu cuireadh 's cuid oidhch' oirnn, càit' a' beil a' biadh tha thu 'dol thoir dhuinn?"

"O uill," thuirt i, "tha tarbh bhàn air a' lòn ann a' shin, agus marbhaibh fhèin e, agus thoiribh leis na thogras si' dheth."

"Nis," thuirt Fionn, ris na gillean aig', "tha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn," thuirt e, "tha e sgìth, 's tha e ag iarraidh anail. Ruithibh sibh-s' bhàn agus, eh, marbhaibh an tarbh tha sin agus thoir an àird, eh, rud a nì dìot dhuinn."

Chaidh na balaich bhàn, ach, cha deach iad uamhraidh fad' dar a bh'ac' ri tilltinn. Oir do chunnaic a' tarbh 'tighinn aid, chuir e curlag air an earball aig', agus as an dèidh a thug es'. Bha e fiadhaich, agus a h-uile sèid bha e 'cur á 'shròin, 'se tein' bha 'tighinn mach. Thàinig iad sin air ais agus dh'innis iad seo dha Fionn.

"Ach uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, " 'se colach gu' tèid, gu' [] mi fhèin dhol bhàn."

Char Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn bhàn agus, choinnich e fhèin 's an tarbh a chèil'. Rug e air, air adharc, dhà adharc air an tarbh, 's thug e an car ud dha, 's chuir e dhen amhaich e. 'S ru-- dar a chuir e dhen amhaich e, thug e leis pìos dhèanadh dha fhèin, biadh dha fhèin, agus dha Fionn. Agus thàinig e bhàn, "Nis, 'bhalachaibh," thuirt e, "ruithi' sibh-se agus, thoiri' leis biadh dhuibh fhèin. Thoiribh leis feòil dhuibh fhèin an àird a' sin."

Char iad sin bhàn, na balaich, le sgianan ac', 'dol a thoir leis feòil dhèanadh suipeir dhoibh. 'S na h-uile triob rachadh iad-s' a ghearradh an craiceann dheth, na pìos dhen fheòil, bha i 'bualadh air ais a-rithistich, 's dh'fhairtlich orra baod<sup>11</sup> thoir leis.

Ach, thàinig iad sin air ais, 's dh'innis aid, "Och, chan eil 'n t-acras oirnn, 'Fhionn, cha-- nì sin 'n gnothach, chan fheagal. Nì sin an gnothach gu madainn 's, chan eil an t-acras oirnn.

"Och," thuirt Fio-- thuirt, uh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "cha dèan sin 'gnothach gu madainn, feumaidh si' biadh fhaighinn."

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<sup>11</sup>Gaelicisation: "bit".



Ach, chaidh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn bhà 's, thug e an àird biadh dhoibh. Gheàrr es' pìos dhoibh dhen tarbh, 's thug e an àird e.

"Sheo a-nis," thuirt e. "Cuir' fhèin air an tein' dhuì' fhèin e 's ithibh."

Uill, fhuair iad sin deagh suipeir ri ith', 's fhuair iad staigh 'san taigh 's, thuirt Fionn, rìgh na Fraing riuth', "Nis," thuirt e ri Gille na' Cochlana' Craicinn, "ruith thus' laigh'," thuirt e, "uill tha thu sgìth bho thàinig thu seo. Bha thu 'dèanamh mòran obair. Suidh' thus' laigh' agus, caithrisidh sinn a' chiad ceann dhen oidhch'. Agus faod' tus' an ceann mu dheireadh chaithris."

"Ach uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochlana' Craicinn, "chan eil, chan eil mis' 'faireachdainn sgìth mar sin 'Fhionn. Agus bu-- b'fheàrr leam-as a' chiad ceann dhen an oidhch' chaithris, agus, eh, 'n darna ceann, gu' d'readhainn<sup>12</sup> laigh'."

"Uill, uill, ma tha," thuirt Fionn, "do thoil fhèin."

Chaidh iad sin laighe 's, bha Fi-- bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn aig an tein' e fhèin. Ach, bha e 'fuireach ris a' rud ris a' robh e 'fuireach. Cha robh e fad' ann a' sin dar a chual' e guth aig an doras.

"Mharbh thu mo dhuin', 's mharbh thu mo mhic, 's mharbh thu mo dhubh-ogha-- mo oghaichean, 's mharbh thu mo dhubh-oghaichean. Ach thig mach 's feuch buill' is mis'."

Chaidh Gille 'an Cochulla Craicinn mach, 's bha rud ann a' sin cho mòr ri mon', 'na sheas' aig an doras.

Ach ghobh e fhèin 's Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn dha chèil', ann a' sin. Ach fo dheireadh, chuir Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ri talamh e 's, thug e an ceann deth le 'chladheamh.

Nis, dar a rinn Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn seo, bha fhios aig' nach tig' an còrr chur dragh air, a's an eilean. Agus thug e glaoth ri Fionn, gu' faodadh e pàirt [dhiubh, na] balaich dhùsgadh.

"O gu dè eil'," Fionn, "ach dùsg-- èirichibh mach 'bhalachaibh."

Dh'èirich Fionn e fhèin 's, chaidh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, char e laighe. Ach, bha Fionn 'dol mach gus an doras, char e mach gus an doras air gnothaich dha fhèin, agus, dar char e mach, thuit e tarsainn air a' rud bha 'san doras.

"Ooo," thuirt Fionn, "ged a bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, ged a bha sinn ann a' cadal, cha robh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na chadal. Tha e beudach [] nach deach e laighe a' chiad ceann dhen oidhch'. Thigibh a-mach," thuirt e riuth', "gus a' faic si' seo."

Chaidh na balaich mach. Agus, bha cailleach ann a' sin, agus bha i cho mòr ri *demon* dar bha i 'san doras. Uill, thàinig sin a' madainn an sin 's, chuir iad sin *rig* air a' bhàt' ac' a-rithistich 's, bha iad 'dèanamh air ais dhachaidh.

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<sup>12</sup>A first-person singular conditional form of the verb *dol*, "to go".

"Nis," thuirt tè bàrr Eilean nam Muc, thuirt i ri Fionn, "nach eil thu 'dol a thuasgail do gheasan, 'Fhinn?"

Ach thug Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn sùil oirr'-s', 's thuirt e rith', "Chan fhuilear dhomh bàrr mo chruinn bhith á fianais an t-eilean, mus tuasgail mis' mo chuid geasan."

Agus, eh, ach bho dheireadh dar a bha bàrr na cruinn aig' á fianais an eilean, thuasgail Gille nan Cochulla a chuid -- bhon an uinneag i.

Agus nis dh'innis e dha Fionn, "Nis," thuirt e ri Fionn, "dar a bhios sinn leth sligh', thig meall dorch'," thuirt e, "bhos cinn an t-soithich, agus èirichidh mis' 'na mo mheall dorch' dhen t-soitheach. Agus bidh sinn ann a' sin," thuirt e, " 's cumas do shùil oirnn, agus dar a chì thu 'dà mheall tha seo 'sgaoileadh, bidh mis' 'tighinn bhàn, gus an t-soitheach, 's bios a' meall eil' 'dol air ais a' rathad a thàinig e. Ach dè sa' bith nì thu, feuch [] dar bhios mis' 'tighinn bhàn, gu' cum thu slige na sleagh rium, nach cum thu roinn na sleagh.<sup>13</sup> Ma chumas tu roinn na sleagh rium, marbhas e mì. Ach ma chumas thu slige-- slige na sleagh rium, bidh mì beò."

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<sup>13</sup>Here *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* is about to engage in a mid-air fight with his brother in the form of a cloud, and he directs Fionn that when he finishes fighting and descends to the ship, Fionn should keep the blunt end (*slige*) of his spear (*sleagh*) towards him rather than the point (*roinn*) of his spear. The word "*slige*" is problematic, as it usually means the "hull of a vessel" (cf. Dwelly 1988), although it is possible that in this case it means some sort of hollow part or cap which is fitted onto the end of the spear, thus denoting the blunt end. There is, however, some confusion here between the blunt end of the *spear*, and the tail end of the *ship*, for Brian has explained this incident in English as follows: "...it's the king, that kept the, the bow of the ship to him instead of keeping the tail end of the ship from [him] when he was coming back, he fell down and, he broke himself on the [*B.S. trails off*] .... He meant, he meant to keep the tail end of the ship [towards him] ...." (2 July 1994, Tape 1 of 2). Here Brian seems to conceive this incident as involving the tail end of the *ship*: it is unclear as to whether this is instead of, or in addition to, the blunt end of the *spear*. Perhaps he imagines both to be involved in the scene. In three subsequent recordings of the story he mentions *slige na sleagh* and says that Fionn must keep the boat pointed away from the descending hero. Consider the following from the April 1993 recording: "Ach cuimhnich," thuirt e, "cum slige na sleagh rium. Na cum roinn a' bhàt' rium.... Ma thèid mi a-bhàn air roinn a' bhàt', bidh mis' marbh...ma chumas thu slige na bàt' rium...bidh mì ceart gu leor." ("But remember," he said, "keep the blunt end of the spear towards me. Do not keep the point of the boat towards me.... If I go down on the point of the boat, I'll be dead...if you keep the hull of the ship towards me...I'll be all right.") Here Brian uses both the phrases "*slige na sleagh*" and "*slige na bàt'*," indicating that perhaps there has been some conflation of terminology from what were once two separate motifs.

Interestingly, in Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord's version, Fionn is clearly instructed to keep the blunt end of a *spear* towards *Gille nan Coculla Craicinn*, and the problematic term *slige* is not used: "...cum thu bas na sleagh' rium nach e ruinn na sleagh' chumas thu rium" ("...keep the end of the spear towards me it's not the point of the spear that you'll keep towards me") (SA 1955/124/A2).

In Ailidh Dall's version of 1958, which he tells in English, it is also clearly a spear which Fionn is to keep pointed away from *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*:

"And when I'll be coming down, you'll keep the safe side of the' -- well, whatever he -- I don't know what you'd call them in English -- his arrow. 'And if you'll put the tail side to me,' he says, 'that'll keep me,' he says.... And with the hurry that Fionn took, it's the sharp side he kept to him, and he killed him" (SA 1958/75/B2 & SA 1958/76/A1).

Alan Bruford also confirms that we should expect to find the hero falling on the point of a spear here: "...in Northern Scottish versions, Céadach [*Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*] kills his opponent and is then killed by descending on to the spear-points of the Fenians" (1969: 126).

Ach 'se seo a bh'ann. Bha iad, dar bha iad dìreach leth sligh' mar a thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, chunnaic aid meall dorch' 'tighinn bhos cinn an t-soitheach, 's thug e an èigh às.

"Mac rìgh a' Sorch'," thuirt e, "èirich an àird 's feuch buill' is mis'."

Dh'èirich sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 'na mheall dorch' dhen an t-soitheach.

Agus, "Och, och," thuirt Fionn, "mis' 'g ràdh 'Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn,' ri duin' nas àird' na mì fhèin."<sup>14</sup>

Ach bha an sin, an dà mheall bha seo, bha aid uairean a' sabaid cleas<sup>15</sup> dà dhuin', 's bha aid uairean eil' a' sabaid cleas dà tharbh. Ach bho dheireadh thall, dar a sgaoil aid, leis a', a' bhoil char air Fionn, 'sann a chum e slige na sleagh ris -- roinn na sleagh. 'S dar thàinig Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn bhàn, bha e marbh.

'S bha màthair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na suidh' air tìr, 'sealltainn air seo.

" 'S math char dhut, 'Fhinn," thuirt i, "nach e le do dheòin a rinn thu e. Na' b'ann," thuirt is', "chuirinn thu fhèin agus do shoitheach gu ghrunnd a' mhuir."

'S dar bha a' soitheach gu bhith aic', chuir i mach a làimh, 's thug i aon spionadh oirr', 's thug i staigh air a' tìr i.

"Cuir 'nam aparan e," thuirt i.

Chuir a' sin Fionn, chuir e Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na h-aparan. Dh'fholbh i sin nis, agus ghobh i an caman iochdar, 's a' slacan draoidheachd aic' agus an claidheamh gach solais, 's thug i Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn beò a-rithistich.

Agus, dar fhuair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn gu' robh e beò a-nis, 's gu' robh e *fit* airson folbh, "O uill," thuirt e nis, "feum' mi nis fholbh," thuirt e, "agus faicinn mu dhèidhinn mo bhràthair," thuirt e. "Tha fhios a'm," thuirt e, " 's gu' bheil e easlan."

Dh'fholbh e sin 's, thug e leis *hand-case* aig', bh'aig' ann a' sin, 's dh'fholbh e 'se dotair a bh'ann, bha e 'folbh 'na dhotair. 'S ruig e taigh 'bhràthar, agus dar a ruig e taigh 'bhràthar thug e sùil, 's chunnaic e ceann air maid' a' sin, 's ceann air stob a' seo. Agus, dar a ghnog e aig a' doras, thàinig cail' òg gus an doras. Dh'fhoighnich is' dè bha e ag iarraidh.

"O," thuirt es', " 'se dotair a th'annam."

"Dotair," thuirt i.

" 'S tha mi 'creidsinn," thuirt es', "gu bheil feum dotair oirbh ann a' seo."

"O tha," thuirt is', "tha feum gu leòr oirnn ann a' seo, airson dotair. Ach, balach brèagha, òg mar tha thus'," thuirt i, "bu mhòr a' beud do cheann-as fhaicinn air --"

[SA 1958/72 ends. The story is continued on SA 1958/73.]

<sup>14</sup>Here the idea is that when Fionn hears *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* addressed as the son of the king of *Sorch*, he comments that he has been using the term "lad" (*gille*) to address a man of greater status than himself.

<sup>15</sup>Here the word "*cleas*" is used idiomatically to mean "like": "...sometimes they were fighting *like* two men, and other times they were fighting *like* two bulls," i.e., in the form of men or bulls.

Bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha e beò a-rithist.<sup>16</sup> Ach a-nis, dar a fhuair e gu' robh e *fit*, agus gu' robh e, gu' robh e math gu leòr airson *travel* a dhèanamh, dh'fholbh e, thuirt e ri 'mhàthair, "Feum' mi nis folbh," thuirt e, "agus mo bhràthair fhaicinn."

'S dar a dh'fholbh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 'se 'na dhotair a bha e, dh'fholbh e 'na dhotair. 'S ruig e sin taigh 'bhràthar 's, dar a ruig e 'n taigh, sheall e aig an doras, 's bha ceann air stob a' sin, 's bha ceann air stob a' seo. Ach, ghnog e aig a' doras, thàinig cail' gus an doras, boirionnach òg, 's dh'fhoighnich is' dè bha e ag iarraidh.

"O," thuirt es', " 'se dotair a th'annam."

"O a-nis," thuirt is', "tha feum gu leòr air dotair a' seo. Ach, bu mhòr a' beud dha bhalach brèagha, òg, ma tha thus' --

[*The tape is here interrupted by a recording of girls singing. The story then resumes with a re-cap of the last incident as follows:*]

Bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha e beò a-rithist. Agus dar fhuair e gu' robh e fhèin nis *fit* gu leòr airson dhèanamh air a shon fhèin, thuirt e ri 'mhàthair, "Ah uill," thuirt e nis, "feum' mi nis a dhol agus, faicinn mu dheidhinn mo bhràthair." Agus dar a dh'fholbh e an triob seo, 'se 'na dhotair a bha e. Ruig e taigh a bhràthar, ann a' sin, 's dar a ruig e, thug e sùil 's, bha ceann dotair air stob a' sin, 's bha ceann dotair air stob a' seo. Ach, ghnog e aig a' doras, thàinig cail' òg gus an doras. Dh'fhoighnich is' dè a bha e a' dèanamh.

"O," thuirt e, " 'se dotair a th'annam. 'S tha mi 'cluinntinn," thuirt es', "gu beil feum dotair ann a' sheo."

"O tha," thuirt is', "tha feum dotair a' seo." Sin: "Ma nì dotair feum. Ach tha thu fhèin 'faicinn," thuirt i, "na beil sin a dhotairean agus, cha dèanadh iad feum 's, char an ceann thoir dhiubh. Agus bu mhòr a' beud dha balach brèagha, òg mar tha thus', gu' biodh an ceann a thoir dhiot-as."

"Ach uill," thuirt es', "chan fheàrr mo cheann-as na ceann fear eil'."

Agus, thug i sin a-staigh e.

"Uill," thuirt i, "thig a-staigh, ma tha."

Thug i sin staigh e 's, agus, thuirt e rith', "An toir thu gus a' rùm aig' mi?"

"Bheir," thuirt i.

Thug i sin gu rùm a bhràthar e, bha 'bhràthair 'na laighe sin, 's cha robh nìthichean ann ach na cnàimhean, rùisgt'. Agus, thug Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn sùil air 's, thuirt e ris a' chaileag fhàgail cuide ris. Agus thuirt e, "Ma nì mi dad dha, bheir mi -- 'n èigh ort fo cheann 's greiseag."

Shìn a' sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn air a' dhotaireachd, thug e mach an caman iochdar, 's a' slacan draoidheachd aig', agus an claidheamh gach solais aig' 's, shìn e 'cur feòil 's 'cur

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<sup>16</sup>This paragraph and the next are good examples of instances in which Brian re-caps an incident in a story, telling it much the same way each time.



craiceann air mèidrean a bhràthar. 'S dar chuir e feòil 's craiceann air, air na mèidrean aig' air a làimh, thug e sin glaoth rituh' "Thigibh suas, thuirt e, "gus a' faic sibh ciamar tha mi 'dèanamh."

O, 's dar a chunnaic aid seo, bha aid, cha robh fhios ac' dè a dhèanadh iad ris, le toileachadh. "Nis," thuirt e, "leigibh leum -- na cuiribh dragh orm," thuirt e, "gus an toir mi an èigh a-rithist'."

Chuir e sin feòil 's craiceann air a' ghaoirdean aig', agus, air an aodann aig' 's, ach rinn e, obraich e ann a' sin, gus robh a bhràthair 'na shuidh' an àird a's a' leabaidh 's a' bruidhinn ris. 'S bha iad, an fheadhainn a's an taigh, 'bhràthair 's, 'phiùthair 's, 'àthair, bha iad ag èisneachd. "Eisd," thuirt aid, "tha, tha [...] 'bruidhinn ris."

Ach dh'fhosgail e sin 'n doras, agus thug e glaoth, "Thigibh suas," thuirt e.

Thug aid sin suas aid, agus, dar a chunnaic aid -- na -- a's a' -- 'na shuidh' a's a' leabaidh e, cha robh fhios aca dè a dhèanadh iad ri Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

"Ah uill," thuirt e, " 's iomadach dotair a thàinig a' seo, ach tha e colach gur e thus' an dotair ceart, agus 'nad dhotair tha 'dèanamh feum dha."

Bha sin, 'm balach, bha e 'bruidhinn riuth'.

"Ah," thuirt e, thuirt e, "chan eil mi deis' dheth fhathastaich [ ]. Chan eil mi às an leabaidh fhathastai'," thuirt e, ri [ ]. Ach, uh, thuirt e, "Bios e ceart gu leòr."

Ach dh'obraich sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn air ann a' sin 's, bho dheireadh, gus an tug e a bhràthair mach às a' leabaidh, 's bha e 'na sheasamh air an ùrlar 's a' bruidhinn ris.

"Nis," thuirt e, "[...] sinn nis suas a' staidhr' le cheil' gus a' ... faic sinn iad."

Choisich iad sin suas, dar a chunnaic a' chuideach' e, thug aid, leum aid air Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 's chuir iad an làimhean mun cuairt air 's, cha robh fhios ac' dè a dhèanadh iad ris.

Bha iad sin ann a' sin 's, agus, eh, "Nis," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "tha a' tìde dhomh-as bhith 'dol dhachaidh."

Agus, "O, chan eil thu 'dol dhachaidh," thuirt es', "mar sin nis. Feumas thu do phàigh fhaighinn. Agus am pàigh tha thu 'dol a dh'fhaighinn, tha thu dol a dh'fhuireach ann a' seo, agus tha thu 'dol a dh'fhaighinn, leth na h-oighreachd."

"Uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "tha sin glè mhath dhibh," thuirt e, "gu' faighinn," thuirt e, "leth na h-oighreachd. Ach," thuirt es', "bheil cuimhn' a'd air a' bhodach bbaigeir?" thuirt e ri 'bhràthair.

"O, tha," thuirt am bod-- thuirt a bhràthair.

"Uill," thuirt e, "cha do bhreugaich sinn am bodach baigeir. Cuimhnich," thuirt e, "dar bha sinn ann ar giollanan òg, 'cluicheachd ann a' sin, dar a dh'fholbh mis' airson ach gu' breugach sinn a' bodach baigeir. Nach do mharbh an darna fear againn a' fear eil'? Agus, eh, tha e colach," thuirt e, "gur e thus' a mharbh mis'. Agus, le sin," thuirt e, " 'cha toirinn-eas," thuirt



es', "ged a bheireadh si' dhomh an oighreachd agai' uileag, cha toirinn aon latha dhen Fhèinndibh agam air an oighreachd uileag."

'S shin a'ad nis ceann na stòiridh, mar a chuala mis' i.

**Date: November 1973**

**Collector: David Clement**

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 956<sup>1</sup>**

Uill, 'se rìgh òg na Fraing, 's bha e air an Fhèinneach aig' 's, bha banntrach air a', an oighreachd aig, 's bha mac aic'. 'S bha iad nis a' rìgh 's a' bhàn-rìgh 's, na searbhannt-- na searbhaisich aig, eh, an oighreachd. 'S bha aid sin 'g iarraidh gill'. 'S fhuair mac na banntraich, fhuair e *job* bhon a' rìgh. Bha e sin air a', air an oighreachd aig a' rìgh òg na Fraing, agus, dar a bha e, bha, cha robh e fhèin agus, eh, luchd-oibrich aig a' rìgh eil', cha robh aid 'còrdadh ro math. 'S bha e 'toir sgailc air fear a' sin dhiubh, 's sgailc air fear a' seo dhiubh. Agus, sin a ghobh iad nis, eh, 'nan ceann e, gu' cuireadh aid air folbh e. Cha robh aid 'ga iarraidh. 'S cha robh doigh ac' air eh, faighinn eh, clioras e.

Ach thuirt Seanagaidh Seanagabh<sup>2</sup> ris a' rìgh, eh, "Cuiribh," thuirt e, "leum na staing mhòr e, 'n aghaidh 'chùlaibh, 's 'n aghaidh 'bheulaibh. 'S bios sibh-s' 'tilgeil, 'tilgeil eh, na biodagan air-eas, 'n aghaidh roinnibh, 's bios es' 'gan tilgeil air ais oirbh-eas, 'n aghaidh basaibh."

'Se seo a rinn aid. Chuir aid nis leum a' staing mhòr, 'n aghaidh 'chùlaibh 's 'n aghaidh 'bheulaibh e. 'S bha aid 'tilgeil na biodagan air-eas, 'n aghaidh roinnibh, 's bha es' 'gan tilgeil air ais orra-s', 'n aghaidh basaibh.

Agus, dar rinn e sin, thog e iad 's chuir e air a cheann e 's, thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "Uill," thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "tha mi ... fad' [ann a'] comain," thuirt e, "airson, eh, na dh'iarr si' rium-as, agus airson sin," thuirt e, "tha mi 'ga na fàgail."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>I have had some difficulty identifying the correct number of this recording, due to the fact that among the Linguistic Survey of Scotland recordings there are *two* tapes labelled "956," each of which has different contents. The box containing the tape which has the present story on it has the words "November 1973" written on it, which leads me to believe that this recording is probably *not* really recording 956, as tape 956 is supposed to date from April, 1977. Anyone wishing to listen to the original recording from which the present transcription was made should make a note of the existence of both tapes, and make sure to obtain the Tape 956 which corresponds to this story.

<sup>2</sup>*Seanagaidh Seanagabh*: Brian has explained this character to me as "a very old woman.... And she's supposed to [have] knowledge of every kind of thing....knowledge of all things.... And you'd go to her for advice" (19 July 1997, Tape 1 of 1). Brian's pronunciation of the second element of the name varies from *Seanagabh* to *Seanagal* to *Seanmhair*. The first element, "*Seanagaidh*" is perhaps related to the word "*Seanachaidh*," which refers to a reciter of tales or a person otherwise skilled in ancient knowledge. Dr. John MacInnes has told me that he has heard of the character in stories, but has not come across the name in print.

<sup>3</sup>"*tha mi 'ga na fàgail*": "I am leaving you" [plural]. Here the East Sutherland form of the second person plural possessive pronoun is in evidence: "*na*" is used to mean "your," and here Brian forms "*'ga na*" "at your" [plural] much as he would the singular construction "*'ga do*" ("at your"). See Dorian 1978: 97-99 for more information on possessive pronouns and related constructions.

'S dh'fholbh sin an gill', 's char e air ais gu 'mhàthair.

Bha e sin cuide ri 'màthair, ach, fhuair a' rìgh sg-- sgeul, fios, fios 's cuireadh air, a dhol gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc. Agus, dar fhuair e seo, dh'innis e seo nis dha Seanagaidh Seanagal.

"O uill," thuirt Seanagaidh Seanagal ris, "Cha b'urr' dhut fios na bu mheas' na sin fhaighinn, dhol gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc. 'S chan eil duin' agad-as," thuirt i, "thèid eh -- nì feum 'sam bith air bàrr Eilean nam Muc, ach na' robh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn agad, mac na banntraich [...] dhol ann. Uill dhèanadh es' e."

Ach, dh'fholbh a' sin 'rìgh 's, char e gu Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 's, agus, thuirt e ris thighinn air ais.

"Cha tèid," thuirt, eh, Gille 'an Cochulla Craicinn ris. "Cha tèid mis' air ais gu bràch gus a', eh, an Fhèinn agad."

"Och," thuirt a' rìgh ris, "bi 'tighinn. Agus nì mi 'na do stiùbhaird thu air an Fhèinn agam."

Agus, "Uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "ruith 's faic mo mhathair, 's ma leigeas mo mhathair às thu -- mis' dhol ann cuide riut -- thèid mi ann."

" 'S cà' am faic mi do mhàthair?"

"Chì thu," thuirt e, "i 'na suidh'," thuirt e, "aig èirigh na grèin', air tolman [daitht' uain'],<sup>4</sup> 's bios i 'cìreadh a cheann (*sic*)."

Char a' sin a' rìgh 's, 's fhuair e, eh, màthair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 's bha e mar a thuirt a mac, bha i 'cìreadh a ceann. 'S rug e air fhalt e.

"Ooo," thuirt i, " 'Fhionn. Och," thuirt i, "tha fhios a'm gur tu a th'ann. Leig às do ghrèim."

"Cha leig," thuirt e rith', "mi às mo ghrèim. Gus a' faigh mis' a' rud a thàinig mi a dh'iarraidh."

"Uill," thuirt i, "rudan a thàinig thu dh'iarraidh, chan fhaigh thu sin gu bràch."

"Uill, mur fhaigh," thuirt es', "cha leig mis' às mo ghrèim."

"Och," thuirt i ris a-nis, "leig às do ghrèim, 'Fhinn."

"Cha leig," thuirt e.

"Uill, seall seo," thuirt i ris. "Bheir mis' dhut mo mhac airson dhol a dh'ait' 'sa' bith air an t-saoghal cuide riut, ach a dh'aon àit': gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc."

"Ah, uill," thuirt Fionn òg rith', "shìn a'd," thuirt e, " 'n dearbh àit' 'sa beil agam-as ri dhol."

Agus. Ach, fo dheireadh, thug, eh, a mhathair an t-òrdugh dha.

"Uill," thuirt i, "faodas thu fhaighinn. Ach cuimhnich," thuirt i, "dar a thilleas thu dhachaigh, ma bhios Gill' na' Coch' -- eh, ma bhios Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, ma bhios e marbh, cuireas thu seòl-- siùil dhubh ris a' bhàt'. 'S ma bhios e beò, fagas thu na siùil tha rith'.

"Ceart gu leòr," thuirt a' rìgh rith'.

<sup>4</sup>The recording is unclear, but "*daitht' uain*" ("green coloured") is a possibility.

Dh'fhàg aid a-nis, thàinig e sin air ais, agus, eh, thug e leis am balach cuide ris, mac na banntraich. Agus, sheòl aid a' sin gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc. Ach dar thàinig iad a' fianais an t-eilean, thug an fheadhainn a bha 'sa chaisteal air an eilean sùil orr'. 'S cheangail aid na casan aig na h-uile h-aon bh'air a' bhàt, ris a' bhàt', char aid ceangal, bha aid ris a' bhàt', ach Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

Ruig iad sin an t-eilean, 's thuirt a' -- thug a' sin iad glaoth riuth'. Eh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, cheangail es' an fheadhainn bha 'sealltainn mach air na h-uinneagan, cheangail es', Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, cheangail e na h-amhaichean aca-s' ris na h-uinneagan. 'S thug a-nis, an tè a bha 'san eilean glaoth riuth', ri Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

Eh, "Tuasgail do gheasan, rìgh òg na Fraing."

"Cha thuasgail," thuirt, eh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn. "Tuasgail thus' do gheasan, mar is tus' bu luaith' a chuir aid."

Ach thuasgail i sin, leig i às aid, bho na bàtaichean. Thug i sin an ath-ghlaoth riuth', beil iad dol a thuasgladh na h-amhaichean ac' bho na h-uinneagan.

"O, chan eil," thuirt e. "Gus a' bi bàrr na crùinn aig a' bhàt' agam-as," thuirt e, " 'fàgail an t-eilean."

Ruig iad sin 'n t-eilean 's, char aid, fhuair aid, eh, dachaigh, 's taigh 's, char aid staigh ann.

Agus, "Ruithi' mach," thuirt nis, thuirt Gille nan Cochulla -- thuirt a' rìgh, " 's glanaibh, a bhalaich, an taigh tha sin, gus a' faigh sinn an oidhch' chur ann."

Char aid sin staigh ghlanadh an taigh mach, ach na h-uile triob chuireadh aid spaid às an taigh airson a ghlanadh, dar a thogadh aid e, bha e 'leum dhen a' spaid, bha e 'dol air ais air an ùrlar. Ach, chaidh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn staigh 's, ghobh es' sp-- eh, spaid agus bruise,<sup>5</sup> 's ghlan e mach a' taigh 's. Agus, eh.

"Nis," thuirt aid riuth' -- 'rìgh. "Ruithi' mach 'fhearaibh nis agus thoiribh anail dha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, agus, eh, cuiribh tein' air."

Bha cruach mòn', mach aig ceann an taigh. Char iad mach dh'iarraidh mòn', a h-uile fòid bha aid-eas 'togail às a' chruach, bha aid 'ga faighinn mullach a' chinn.

Thàinig iad staigh 's, thuirt na balaich aig a' rìgh ris, luchd-seirbhis, "Och," thuirt iad ris, "tha sinn com'. Chan eil sinn fuar ann."

Ach, char sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach 's, thug e staigh, eh, ultach mòn', 's chuir e tein' air.

Chaidh [e] sin 'ga gharachdainn 's, bha sin an t-acras orr'-s'. Thug e sin glaoth ris an tè bha 'san eilean -- uill o chuir i cuireadh 's cuid oidhch' orr', carson nach robh i 'dol a thoir' dhoibh biadh?

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<sup>5</sup>Gaelicisation: "brush".

Agus, thuirt a' tè bha-- "Ooo," thuirt i, "tha tarbh air a' lion-- air a', bhàn air a', air a' lòn ann a' sin, agus ma thèid si' a-mach faod' si' fhèin mharbhadh."

Char iad sin mach, 's char a' -- na bal-- eh, luchd-oibrich aig, aig a' rìgh mach mharbhadh 'n tarbh. Ach, cha deidheadh aid fàisg air an tarbh. Bha a' tarbh cho fiadhaich, 's bha e 'cur [spuinnsean]<sup>6</sup> tein' á 'shròin.

Ach, thàinig aid air ais, 's thuirt iad riuth', ris a' rìgh, "Och, chan eil an t-acras oirnn."

"Och, uill, nach eil?" thuirt a' rìgh. Dh'èirich sin, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 's char e bhàn don a' lòn 's, mharbh e an tarbh, 's thug e, eh, pìos leis dha fhèin agus dhan a' rìgh òg na Fraing, Fionn òg, 's ròist aid air an tein' dhoibh e 's, 's dh'ith aid e 's.

"Nis," thuirt e ris na balach-- ri luchd-shearbhaisich. "Tha an tarbh ann a' sìod, tha e marbh, ruithi' fhèi' 's thoiribh feòil às."

Dh'fholbh iad sin mach, le an cuid sgianan 's, bha iad 'toir' a' chraicinn dhen an tarbh 's, na h-uile baod bheireadh aid dheth, bha 'rud 'leum air ais rithistich, bha e stìsdig<sup>7</sup> air ais mar a bha i riamh 's roimhe. 'S thàinig iad sin air ais.

"Och," thuirt, eh, 'rìgh riuth', "nach d'fhuair si' feòil dhuibh-fhèin?"

"Och, cha d'fhuair," thuirt luchd-shearbhaisich aig'. "Chan eil an t-acras oirnn 'Fhionn."

Ach, chaidh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach, 's bha aig' ri an fheòil aig luchd-shearbhaisich thoir' staigh 's, thoir' dhoibh. Uill, dar fhuair iad sin i, ròist iad i, 's dh'ith aid i. Agus.

Nis, thàinig an oidhch'. Agus, bha iad sin, mu' cuairt air an tein', 's char an tein' bhàn, 's thuirt a' rìgh riuth', "Ruith' a-mach 'fhearaibh, 's thoiribh staigh geinn eil' de mhòn', chuireas si' air an tein'."

Chaidh iad sin mach, ach, choinnich fear ann a' sin aid -- ghobh e, theab e, an ceann sgudadh dhiubh, le 'chromag.

Thuirt e ris -- "Och," thuirt iad ris, thàinig iad staigh air ais, thuirt iad ris a' rìgh, "chan urr' dhuinn dad fhaighinn. Tha fear a-mach a' sin 's, theab e 'na' marbhadh."

Chaidh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach 's, chunnaic e 'rud a bha seo 's -- thog e -- chuir e às dha, mharbh e e.

Nis, thàinig sin an oidhch' 's, "Ahh," thuirt Gille-- thuirt a' rìgh, Fionn òg, ris, "Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn," thuirt e, "tha thu sgìth a-nisd [], na rinn thu a dh'obair, 's na a rinn thu bho thàinig thu seo. 'S fheàrr dhut-s'," thuirt e, "dhol laigh' agus cadal fhaighinn."

<sup>6</sup>"*spuinnsean*": this word appears to mean something like "spumes" or "spouts". In the April 1993 recording of this story, the phrase used is "*spùtan teine*," "spouts of fire," while the September 1993 recording also has "*spuinnsean teine*".

<sup>7</sup>"*stìsdig*": this word occurs in a number of recordings in a similar context, and seems to be a Gaelicisation of the English "to stick". Dwelly lists both "*stèic*" and "*stic*" as forms of English "stick". I suggest that the final hard "c" in stick has become softened to a "sh" sound in Brian's Gaelic, and the -*dic* ending added to form the word as Brian has it, "*stìsdig*".



"Cha tèid," thuirt, eh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ri Fionn òg, ri' a' rìgh. "Ruithibh sibh-s' dhachaigh, a laigh', airson a' chiad *spell* dhen oidhch', 's thèid mis' chadal an darna triob."

'Se seo a rinn aid. Char iad sin laighe 's, cha robh aid fad' 'na' laigh', [n]an cadal, dar chual' Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn [...] <sup>8</sup> aig an taigh.

'S thuirt guth ris: "Mharbh thu mo mhac, 's mharbh thu mo dhuin'. Ach thig mach, agus feuch buill' is mis'."

Chaidh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach, 's bha dìreach oidhche bhochd aig' fhèin agus aig a' tè bha 'san doras. Ach fo dheireadh thall, chuir Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ri talamh i, 's sgud e an ceann dith leis a' chladheamh aig'. 'S thàinig e sin staigh, 's bha fhios aig' a-nis gu' robh an oidhch' -- gu' faodadh e an sin dhol a chadal.

Thug e glaoth ris a' rìgh: "Nis," thuirt e, "faod' si' èirigh, agus, eh, leig--"

"O, leigidh, leigidh," dh'èirich iad an sin 's, och, gu math trath a's a' madainn, 's bha rudeigin dorch. 'S char feadhainn a-mach gus an doras, dhan amharc fhèin <sup>9</sup> 's, cha robh aid 'faicinn ceart. 'S thuit aid thairis air a' rud a bha 'san doras.

"H-e-h," thuirt Fionn òg riuth', "bha sinn ann an cadal," thuirt e, "ach cha robh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na chadal." Thuirt e, "Bha fhios aig'-eas gu dè bha ri thighinn."

Agus, thàinig sin a' madainn. 'S bha aid, bha iad 'dol a fhàgail nis an t-eilean. Agus, dar a sheòl aid sin, thug a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal [glaodh], "Nach eil thu 'dol a thuasgladh do gheasan ... Fhionn òg?"

"Chan eil," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "tuasgail' mis' iad mar thuirt mi, dar a bhios bàrr nan crùinn againn 'fàgail á fianais an eilean."

Agus, dh'fhàg iad sin an t-eilean 's, leig, eh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, thuasgail e na geasan aig' 's, leig e tuasgail bho na h-uinneagan iad.

"Nis," thuirt e ri F-- ri 'rìgh òg na Fraing, "dar a bhios sinn," thuirt e, "leth-sligh'," ... thuirt e, "chì thu a's an iarmailt," thuirt e, "meall dorch," thuirt e, " 'tighinn bho thuath, 's chì thu meall eil' -- 's dh'èirichidh mis'," thuirt e, " 'na mo mheall dorch, dhen a' bhàt'. Agus bidh sinn ann a' sin," thuirt e, "bhos cinn an t-soitheach agad, gus a' tèid a' rud a bhios ann seachad. Ach cuimhnich," thuirt e, "dar a bhios am meall dorch," thuirt e, " 'tuit-- 'tighinn bhàn gus a' bhàt', gun cum thu," thuirt e, "sligean na sleagh rium."

"O, cumaidh. Cumaidh," thuirt a' rìgh òg ris.

'S cha robh e a' sin -- bha iad mu leth-sligh', dar a thug a' rud a bh'ann glaoth riuth'.

"Rìgh ò-- eh, rìgh òg, mac rìgh na Sorch," thuirt e ris. "Èirich an àird, agus feuch buill' is mis'."

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<sup>8</sup>Here the unintelligible phrase denoted by [...] sounds like "*Ioran Nòran*" -- possibly the name of a stock character. In other recordings of the story B.S. tells of a hag coming to fight with *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* but does not give the hag a name.

<sup>9</sup>"*dhan amharc fhèin*"; "to their own watch," i.e., Fionn's men go out to take their turn at keeping watch through the night.

'S mar a thuirt aid, dh'èirich Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn dhen t-soitheach 'na mheall dorch, bha a' ce-- meall eil' dorch 'tighinn bho thuath.

"Och, och," thuirt e, rìgh òg na Fraing. "Mis' 'dèanamh gill'," thuirt e, "obraich'," thuirt e, "dhe fear as àrd na mi fhèin."

'S bha iad sin bhos cinn an t-soithich, bha aid trì latha 's trì oidhch' ann. Ach, aig a' cheann mu dheireadh, chunnaic e na meallan 'sgaoileadh bho chèil'. 'S leis a' -- mar chaidh a' rìgh 'na bhoil', leis a' rud a bh'ann, 'se roinn, roinn a' sleagh chum e. 'S dar thàinig Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn bhàn, eh, bha e marbh.

'S bha a mhàthair, bha i 'na seasamh air a' chladach.

" 'S math char riut, 'Fhinn," thuirt i, "nach e le do dheòin a rinn thu e. Nam b'e," thuirt i, "chuir mis' thu fhèin agus a' soitheach, gu grunn d' a' cuan." 'S ruig i air a' t-soitheach 's, tharraing i staigh i 's, thuirt i ris, eh, rìgh òg na Fraing, "Cuir, cuir 'nam aparán e," thuirt i. Agus. Chuir e sin, 'na h-apan e. 'S thug e sin, thug i dhachaigh e. Agus.

Bha a' sin, a' rìgh, char e dhachaigh, gus an oighreachd aig'eas, gus a' chaisteal aig', e fhèin 's a chuid obraich. Agus, bha sin, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha dotairean air a chur mach às na h-uile h-àit', airson a thoirt beò air ais. Ach, cha robh gin 'ga thoir'. Agus.

Ach co-dhiubh, bha fear a' sin 's fear a' seo 'tighinn, a dhèanamh leigheas air Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn. Cha robh feòil, ach dad ann ach dìreach na cnàimhean. Ach thàinig aon dotair, 's, eh, thàinig e gus a' doras aig, eh, taigh 'mhàthair 's. Chunnaic e ceann air stob a' sin, 's ceann air stob a' seo. 'S eh, thuirt e gun tàinig e a thoir' beò, thoir' beò Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

"Uill," thuirt i ris, "nach [...] dhut-s'," thuirt i fhèin, "thoir, thoir beò Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ta thu 'faicinn na bheil a' sin a chinn air stob."

"Och, uill," thuirt e, "chan eil, cha, cha, chan fheàrr mo cheann-as na ceann fear eil'."

'S thàinig e an sin staigh 's, chunnaic e Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha e 'na laigh' air leabaidh 's. Agus, eh, dhùin e sin 'doras, agus, thug e feòil air a' làimh, chuir e feòil 's craicinn air a' làimh 's, thug e sin staigh aid.

Sheall aid air, "O, tha thu 'dèanamh glè mhath."

Ach, gus d'rinn e -- na thug-- feòil a chur air a h-uile mìr dheth, 's gu' tug e air ais Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, ma bha e riamh 'sa roimhe.

Agus, eh, "Nis," thuirt e ri a mhàthair, "thig a-staigh a-nis. Agus, eh, chì thu do mac."

'S dh'èirich aid a' sin, 's eh, chunnaic a' sin a mhàthair gu' robh Gille nan Cochla -- Cochalnan (*sic*) Craicinn, gu' robh e beò, 's gu' robh e 'buidhinn, 's gu' robh e 'coiseachd.

Agus, eh, "Nis," thuirt a' dotair, bidh mis' 'folbh, air ais," thuirt e, "gu rioghachd m'athar. 'S ma tha thus' 'g iarraidh thìghinn air ais," thuirt e ri Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, " 'se leth an oighreachd, 'se do chuid-s' e."

Agus, chaidh a' sin, thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "Cha tèid," thuirt e. "Cha tèid mis' air ais. Ach, eh, bi thus' 'dol," thuirt e 's, "tha mis' 'dol air ais gus an Fhèinn, aig eh, aig Fionn òg."

'S char Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, e fhèin 's a mhàthair, air ais. 'S fhuair Gille nan Coch', Cochulla Craicinn bhith 'na, 'na -- bhith glè àird aig, aig a' rìgh 's, fhuair a' bha-- a' bhantrach, 'mhàthair, bha i, eh ... dachaidh 's, taighean fhaighinn air an oighreachd. 'S eh, chan eil fhios nach eil aid ann a' sin fhathastaich, [chan eil] fhios agam. Shin a'd ceann 'stòiridh co-dhiubh, ach --

D.C.: O, glè mhath.

B.S.: Ach 'se 'bhràthair, 'beil thu a' tuigsinn, eh, bha -- char mi bìdeag bheag cam deth ann a' sin, 'se bràthair dha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, am meall dorch' eile, a thàinig. Agus 'se mac rìgh na Fraing a bh'ann cuideachd. Agus 'se a bhràthair a thàinig thoir', eh, thoir' beò a-rithisti' e.

D.C.: Mmm hmm.

B.S.: 'S bha -- Shin a'd a-nisd Stòiridh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

D.C.: Ah, bha e glè mhath. *[Pause.]* Bha mi, bha mi dìreach--

*[Tape is stopped. Nothing more on Side 1 of tape.]*

## GILLE NAN COCHULLA CRAICINN

**Date:** 16 April 1993

**Collector:** Carol Zall

*Well, the king, he was out hunting.* Rìgh, bha e mach 'sealg. 'S thuit ceò, 's chaill e a' rathad. 'S chunnaic e solas, 's rinn e air a' solas, 's thàinig e gu taigh bha ann a' sin 's. O, [] ghnog e aig an doras, dh'fhosgail aid e 's, dh'innis e cò bh'ann, Rìgh na Sorch.

"O, thig a-staigh," thuirt aid ris, "thig a-staigh, thig a-staigh. Thig a-staigh, 'rìgh."

Fhuair iad a-staigh e 's thug aid dha, bha iad 'dèanamh *welcome* mòr ris. 'S fhuair e 'bhiadh 's fhuair e 'leabaidh, 's bha e ann a' sin, o, bha, seachad air bliadhn', a's an taigh sin, cuide ri -- bha dithis chailean ann, agus am màthair.

Ach aon de na lathaichean, dar dh'èirich e -- "Ach," thuirt e rith', "cha chreid mi nach tèid mi dhachaidh an diugh."

"Heh," thuirt a' chail' ris, "chan fhaod thu dhol dhachaidh fhathastaich, gus a' baist tu do mac."

"Heh," thuirt e, "[...] mac e, mac aon oidhch'."<sup>1</sup>

"Uill," thuirt is, "tha thu seo," thuirt i, "bliadhn' agus latha."

Ach, eh. Thàinig e sin air ais gus an oighreachd aige fhèin. Fhuair e sin a mhac, Gill' 'an Cochulla Craicinn. 'S bha e 'na stiùbhardach air an Fhèinn aig'. Agus, eh, bha a' mac, dar a bhiodh e cuide ris a' sluagh bha ag obair air an, an oighreachd, bha e 'toir' sgailc air fear an sin, 's sgailc air fear a' seo. 'S bha iad 'tuiteam marbh. 'S char e a' sin, char a' rìgh gu Seanagaidh Seanagal.

'S thuirt e rith', "O, a' fear tha sin," thuirt e rith', "thug mi [leis e]. Tha e 'n dèidh na h-uileag duin' a bh'agam a mharbhadh."

"Uill," thuirt Seanagaidh Seanagal ris, "Cuir thu ri leum na staing mhòr e, staing mhòr, 'n aghaidh a chùlaibh 's 'n aghaidh a bheulaibh, 's bios 'tilgeil a' biodagan air, 'n aghaidh basaibh -- 'n aghaidh roinnibh, 's bios es' 'gan tilgeil air ais oirbh-eas 'n aghaidh basaibh."

'S bha e 'dèanamh sin, ach bha es' 'ceapa' na, na biodagan, 's bha e 'gam [balg]<sup>2</sup> air ais orr'-s', dar a [bholg] air ais e, bha e 'gam marbhadh.

<sup>1</sup>The word preceding "*mac*" is difficult to make out. However, in other recordings the king says " 's neònach mac e, mac aon oidhch'" ("it's a strange son, a son of one night").

<sup>2</sup>"*balg*": the verb is unclear, but the meaning is easy enough: *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* is catching the dirks which are being thrown at him and throwing (lobbing?) them back at his enemies. Perhaps the word used is related to *bailc*, which can mean "torrent," "spate" and also a "loud noise". Dwelly cites the phrase "*bailc nan sgiath*" ("the noise of the shields"); perhaps the meaning of the word has been extended through an association with a fighting context. Another possibility is the verb *balgaich*, to "puff" or "swell" (Dwelly).

"'S dar a thig e sin," thuirt i, "Cuir thu ruith ri fiadh, ruith aodan na beinn' e. Cuir thu ruith ri fiadh, ri Caoilt', ruith aodann na beinne."

Uill fhuair iad sin 's chuir iad sin, ruith ri Caoilt' e.

"O, bi thus' 'dol, a Chaoilt' bochd," thuirt e, "gus a' ceangail mis' mo bhrog."

'S ruith, ruith e as dèidh Chaoilt', 's thug e -- slatag [], 's thug e ghiog air cùl 'amhaich aig'. 'S rinn e fiadh dheth. 'Se fiadh a bh'ann an Caoilt'.

Uill, char e sin seachad 's, char e nis, char e air ais gu 'mhàthair. Char e air ais cuide ri 'mhàthair. Agus, dar a chaidh, chuir a' -- chuir a', a' rìgh fios air rithistich, chuir e fios air, gu robh e 'ga iarraidh. Thàinig e.

"Dè," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla, "dè a-nis tha thu ag iarraidh?"

"O," thuirt e, "fhuair mi fios, tha agam ri dhol gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc. Agus fe-- tha mi ag iarraidh thus' bhith cuide rium. Gun tig thus', 'tighinn cuide rium."

"Uill," thuirt e, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "cha tèid mis' gus eh ... nas lugha na leigeas mo mhàthair leam a dhol ann. 'S ruith agus foighnich dhe mo mhàthair, ma thèid mi -- ma their ise gum faod mi dhol ann thèid mi ann. 'S mur their--"

"O, 's cà' am faic mi do mhàthair?"

"Chì thu," thuirt e, "bìos i 'na suidh' air tolman dorm<sup>3</sup> -- tolman gorm, bhos cinn na, na mara, bhos cinn a' mhuir, dar a bhios a' griann ag èirigh, 's bìos i 'cìreadh a ceann."

Dh'fholbh Fionn 's, chunnaic e i, 's bha i 'cìreadh 'ceann, 's thàinig e gu-- gu siab<sup>4</sup> oirr', 's rug e air fhalt oirr'.

'S thuirt i ris, "Leig às do ghrèim, Fhionn. Tha thu 'ga mo chiùrradh."

"Tha," thuirt e, "ciùrraidh mi nas moth'."

"Tha fhios a'm," thuirt i, "dè tha thu 'g iarraidh. Tha thu ag iarraidh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn," thuirt i. "Uill," thuirt i ris, "leig mi leis dhol cuide riut a dh'ait' 'sam bith, ach gu Eilean nam Muc."

"O," thuirt e, "shin a'd an dearbh àit' th'agam-as ri dhol, ma tha, gu Eilean nam Muc."

Agus.

"Ah uill," thuirt i ... "faodas thu fhaighinn, ach seo," thuirt i, "ma bhios e marbh, dar a bhios thu 'tighinn air ais, cuireas thu siùil dhubh ris a' bhàt'. Ach ma bhios e beò, fàgas thu na siùilean tha rith'."

"O, ceart gu leòr," thuirt e.

Ach dh'fholbh iad an sin, bha e 'dèanamh a' bhàt' 's, bha e 'seòladh gu, eh ... Eilean nam Muc. 'S an tè a bha an Eilean nam Muc, chuir i mach 'ceann 's thuirt i, thug i sùil air a' bhàt', 's cheangail i na casan ac' ri *deck* a' t-soitheach, nach b'urr' dhoibh gluas'. A thug Gille nan

<sup>3</sup>"*dorm*": a slip of the tongue, with initial /d/ mistakenly substituted for initial /g/.

<sup>4</sup>"*siab*": Dwelly defines *siabadh* as "passing along with a quick continuous motion". Here "*thàinig e gu siab oirre*" might mean something like "he stole upon her".



Cochulla sùil, 's bha aid a' sin' an ceann mach air an uinneag. Cheangail es' na h-amhaichean ac' ris an uinneag.

A thog i sin glaoth ris, an tè bha an Eilean nam Muc:

"Tuasgail do gheasan, 'Fhinn," thuirt i.

"Cha thuasgail," thuirt, eh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn. " 'S tuasgail thus' iad, 's thus' 's luaith' a chuir aid. Tuasgail thus' iad".

Tuasgail a-nis e, 's fhuair iad sin an casan *free*, 's bha iad 'coiseachd.

"Uill, o chuir thu cuireadh agus cuid oidhch' oirnn, nis, feumaidh sinn taigh fhaighinn, 'faigh sinn cadal 's, agus ...."

"O, tha taigh ann a' sin," thuirt i, "ma ghланаibh si' fhèin mach e. Tha e 'suidh' ann a' sin dhut. 'S tha gu leòr tein' ann a' sin, tha cruach mhòn' ann a' sin, ás a gheobh thu tein' dhuinn."

"O," thuirt Fionn rith', "tha sin glè mhath 's. Ruithibh 'fhearaibh," thuirt e ris na gillean aig', "ruithibh agus glanaibh an taigh mach."

Ach. Dar a bha na gillean 'glanadh an taigh mach, na h-uile baod salachar a sguabadh iad dhen an ùrlar, bha e 'folbh orr'-s', cha robh iad 'ga fhaighinn. Ach, thàinig sin 'n oidhch' -- chan e. Char e sin, char e -- dh'iarr e tein'.

"O," thuirt i, "tha cruach mhòn' ann a' sin, 's thoiri' fhèin leis, na mòn' 's."

"Ruith," thuirt Fionn, "ruithribh<sup>5</sup> 'fhearaibh agus 'illean agus thoiribh leis ultach mhòn 's a chuireas sinn air an tein'."

Och, thàinig aid air ais, cha robh dad ac'.

"O, char sinn 'ga iarraidh ach na h-uile fòid a thog sinn bha sinn 'faighinn trì air mullach cinn."<sup>6</sup>

Bha aid 'ga' bualadh air mullach na' cinn.

"Tha fear beag aig a', aig a' chruach, duin' beag aig a' chruach 's ceann mòr air."

Agus.

"Och," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craic', "Feumaidh mi fhèin dhol mach."

Char e mach 's thug e an sin a h-ultach mhòn, 's thug e am fear beag a bh'aig a' chruach, 's ceann mòr air. Thug e, thug e an ceann deth, mharbh e e.

Thàinig e sin staigh 's, "Uill," thuirt e rith' -- an tè bha an Eilean nam Muc, "nis, o chuir thu cuireadh 's cuid oidhch' oirnn, feumas thu nis biadh a thoir' dhuinn."

"Tha," thuirt i, "tha tarbh air a' lòn. Ma thèid si' shìos marbhas<sup>7</sup> si' e. 'S cinnteach gu' cum [sibh ...]."

"O, cumaidh," thuirt Fionn. Thug Fionn aig [...] na gillean aig'.

<sup>5</sup>"*ruithribh*": this appears to be a plural imperative form of *ruith* ("to run") which B.S. occasionally uses.

<sup>6</sup>Here the idea is that for every peat the lads would lift, they were getting three peats over the tops of their heads -- i.e., they were being beaten on the head with peats.

<sup>7</sup>B.S. pronounces this word "*mabharas*," but I take it as a slip of the tongue for *marbhas* ("will kill").

"Ruith' agus" thuirt e, "marbhaibh an tarbh tha siod, 's thoiribh leis a' liais<sup>8</sup> an àird dhomh. Gearr' a' liais dheth 's thoir' an àird dhomh e."

Char-- dh'fholbh iad gus a' lòn gus an tarbh. Ach, dar chunnaic a' tarbh aid, bha e fiadhaich. Och, thàinig aid air ais. "O, chan urrainn dhol faisg air a' bhrùid ud. Bha spùtan tein' 'tighinn mach á 'shròin, 's dh'fheuch sinn air grèim fhaighinn air, 's cha b'urra dhuinn [...]. Ach bha tein' 'tighinn á 'shròin."

"Och," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "feumaidh mi fhèin dhol." Char es' bhàn, 's rug e an tarbh, 's bha adhairc air, adharcean, rug e air a dhà adharc 's, thug e car dha, 's bhris e 'amhaich. Bhris e amhaich an tarbh.

Thàinig e sin air ais, 's thuirt e ri Fionn, "Nis," thuirt e, "ruith na gillean bhàn ris, 's thoireadh aid an craicinn dheth."

"Ruithibh, a ghillean," thuirt e, " 's thoiribh an craicinn dhen tarbh."

Char iad bhàn nis, bha sgianan ac' 's bha aid 'ga gheàrradh, h-uile *bit* a thog iad dhen a' chraic' [*B.S. slaps his hand for emphasis*], bha e 'dol air ais rithistich. Chu b'urra -- och, thàinig aid air ais.

"Chan urr' [dhuinn dad dhèanamh a' siod,] h-uile bideag a bheir sinn às, bha e 'dol air ais a-rithistich."

"O feum' mi fhèin dhol," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn.

Char es' bhàn 's, thug e an craicinn dheth, 's thug e -- gheàrr e pìos dhen a ... dhe na *haunches* aig' 's, thug e dha.

"Sheo a-nis," thuirt e, "shin agai' gu leòr biadh, [...] ròist si' fhèin aid."

Char e 's gheàrr e pìos às an fheadail, le sgian 's [...] e. H-uile bideag thog e, bha i 'dol air ais a-rithistich. Cha robh aig' ach, eh, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ... a gheàrradh ann, 's thoir' dhoi' airson ith'.

'S thuirt Fionn, dar thàinig an oìdhch', thid' dhol a chadal, thuirt Fionn ri Gille nan Cochulla, "O," thuirt e, "Gille nan Co', tha thu sgìth," thuirt e, "nis. Na rinn thu a dh'obair a' seo, bho thàinig thu, tha thu sgìth. Ruith thus' a laigh'. 'S, fuirichidh mis' aig an tein' airson treis."

"Och," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla, "cha tèid," thuirt e. "Ruithibh sibh-s' laigh', ruith' [fhèi'] a laigh'," thuirt e. "Fuirichidh mis'. Ann a' seo," thuirt e, "aig an tein'."

Uill sin, char [] Fionn, char e laigh'. Bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na shuidh' aig an tein', dar thàinig ghnog gus an doras.

Thuirt a' rud a bh'ann, "Bheil thu sin?"

"Tha ... mi seo."

"Mharbh thu mo mhac, mharbh thu mo dhuin', mharbh thu mo oghaichean, 's mharbh thu m'iar -- m'iar-oghaichean. Nis, thig mach agus feuch mis'."

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<sup>8</sup>"*liais*": for "*lias*," "thigh".

Suas gun a' doras char e mach. 'S dar char e mach, bha cailleach ann a' sin, cailleach mhòr, mhòr, 's thuirt e gu' robh na fiacalan, fiacail a bha an doras a' beul, bha iad colt' ri maidean ceangail, mar sin. Bha e fhèin 's a' chailleach 'sabaid, sìos 's suas []. Leag e a' chailleach, 's mharbh e i. Chaidh e sin staigh 's, 'sa mhadainn, dh'èirich eh ... rìgh na Sorch, chaidh e mach 'ga amharc air, 'sa mhadainn. 'S e bha e 'tuiteam thairis air, air a' chail--

"O, hmm," thuirt e, "ged a bha sinne 'na' cadal, cha robh Gille 'an Cochulla Craicinn 'na chadal. Tha e colach," thuirt e, "gur e seo 'rud bha es' 'fuireach rith'."

Uill, thàinig sin 'tìd' dhoibh bith 'dol air ais. Bhith a' folbh air a', air a' bhàt' a-rithistich.

'S thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ris, ri, ri rìgh na Sorch, "Nis," thuirt e, "dar a bhios sinn leth sligh', chì thu meall dubh 'tighinn," thuirt e, "bho tu-- bho tuath. 'S èirichidh mis'," thuirt e, " 'nam mheall dorch, dhen t-soitheach. 'S bidh sinn," thuirt e, "bhos cinn an t-soitheach, bidh sinn ann a' sin dh'fhaodadh," thuirt e "[airson] lathaichean. 'S dar thig, dar sgaoileas sinn," thuirt e, "thig mis' bhàn. Ach cuimhnich," thuirt e, "cum slige na sleagh rium. Na cum roinn a' bhàt' rium. Ma thèid mi a-bhàn air roinn a' bhàt' bidh mis' marbh," thuirt e, "ma chumas thu slige na bàt' rium, thig mi, bidh mi ceart gu leòr."

"O, nì mi sin," thuirt e.

'S mar a thuirt, b'fhior, 's dar thàinig aid leth sligh', thàinig guth bhrathar: "O, mac rìgh na Sorch, èirich an àird agus feuch mis'."

'S dh'fholbh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na mheall dorch dhen t-soitheach. 'S bha iad trì latha 's trì oidhch' an àird a's an adhar, 'sabaid. An sin, sgaoil iad, aig ceann na trì latha, sgaoil aid. Sgaoil aid. 'S bha e 'tighinn bhàn gus a' bhàt'. 'S chaidh Fio-- Fionn -- leis a' *stir* a's a' [bha] e -- 'se -- chum e roinn a' bhàt' ris, 's thàinig e bhàn 's, bha Gille nan Cochulla marbh. 'S bha a mhàthair, màthair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha i 'na suidh', air tolm' bhos cinn a' mhuir.

'S thug i gl[aodh],<sup>9</sup> " 'S math char dhut, 'Fhionn," thuirt i, "nach e le do dheòin a rinn thu e. Nam b'e," thuirt i, "chuir mis' agus do -- do bhàt' [...] a ghrunnd a' chuain." Thàinig e, "Cuir 'nam aparan e," thuirt i.

Chuir e sin na cnàimhean 's rudan aig' na h-ap'-- 'na h-aparan, 's dh'fholbh i leis. Agus. Thug i sin dhachaidh e, gus an taigh bh'aig a mhàthair.

'S, eh, bha a' stòiridh 'dol, chuir i feòil air 's chuir i na cnàimhean le chèil', 's thug i beò e, bha e beò, bha e 'na Ghille nan Cochulla Craicinn a-rithist, beò a-rithistich.

'S thàinig e sin air ais gus, gu Fionn a-rithistich. Chan e, [chaill mi mo stòiridh an sin].<sup>10</sup> Eh, bha e nas fheàrr a-nis, bha e 'na ghille.

<sup>9</sup>Here initial /gl/ is audible but B.S. swallows the rest of the word.

<sup>10</sup>Here B.S. swallows his words and it is impossible to transcribe the phrase with complete accuracy. However, it is clear that he is saying that he has made a mistake and is correcting himself.

Thuir a mhàthair ris, "Och, nach leig thu leas -- nach leig thu às, eh, Caoilt'? Uill, cha d'rinn Caoilt' bochd, cha d'rinn es' dad ort, leig às e. Ruith agus leig às e."

"Och, leigidh," thuir e.

Char e sin air ais 's fhu-- fhuair e Caoilt', thug e ghiogag air Caoil' a-rithist le slatag 's, rinn e duin' deth a-rithistich.

"O, ciamar bha thu, 'Chaoilt'," thuir e 's, "ciamar a tha thu, 'Chaoilt'?"

"O, tha mi gu math," thuir Caoilt' ris, "ach. O, 'mhaighistir," thuir e, "gu dè na caistealan a bh'agad ann a' sin? [...] breàgha a'd."<sup>11</sup>

"Nach robh thu sgìth?"

"Cha robh, cha robh, cha robh," thuir Caoilt'.

Uill, char e sin dhachaidh 's.

"Och," thuir e ri, ri Fionn, "feumaidh mi nis folbh," thuir e, "agus mo bhràthair thoir' beò. Mharbh mis' mo bhràthair," thuir e, "dar bha sinn a's an -- ann na mill dhubh a's an iarmailt. Feumaidh [...] tha es' marbh)," thuir e, "feumaidh mi dhol dhachaidh."

Ruig e an taigh aig a mhàthair 's bha e -- dar a char e a' sin, staigh, bha, ceann air stob a' sin, 's bha ceann air stob a' seo. Ghnog e aig an doras, 'se dotair a bh'ann, mas fhior.

"O," thuir a' bhean ris, "gu dè thug thu seo? Bheil thu ag iarraidh an ceann thoir' dhìot? Seall na bheil a chinn."

"Uill, uill," thuir e, "chan fheàrr mo cheann-as na ceann fear eil'. Thèid mi staigh," thuir e, gu mo bhràthair. Am faic mi dè nì mi ris."

Char e sin staigh. Fhuair e gus a' leabaidh 's, fhuair e 'bhràthair, 's fhuair e a' làimh aig', 's chuir e feòil air an làimh aig', 's chuir e craicinn agus, thug e air ais e. Thà-- thàinig aon de na cailean suas, bha e 'na shuidh' a's a' leabaidh, 's bha e 'buidhinn ris.

"O," thuir i, "tha a' fear seo 'dèanamh feum dha. Tha, tha e 'buidhinn nis," thuir i.

'S bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha e 'buidhinn ri 'bhràthair. Och, bha iad nis, [...]. 'S rinn a' d [sòcraich], cha robh fhios ac' dè dhèanadh iad ris. 'S thug e sin 'beò 'bhràthair.

Agus, "Och, uill," thuir Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "feumaidh mi nis dhol air ais sin-ach gus an Fhèinn."

[Pause.]

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<sup>11</sup>"gu dè na caistealan a bh'agad ann a' sin": in an interview of 19 July 1997, B.S. explained to me that while Caoilte was enchanted in the form of a deer, "... he was in castles and lodges and lovely houses in it, in the rocks and hillside.... Aye, and he was a deer. He was seeing that in it." Ailidh Dall's telling of this story contains these same details. In his 1958 recording, which is told in English, Caoilte is returned to human form and says to *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*: "Och Lord, where was the castles," he says, "in the bonnie place? All that time I was there," he says, "I was delighted," he says, "I would never leave it" (SA 1958/75/B2 & 1958/76/A1).

Agus phòs Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, agus a' chail' bha a's an taigh sin. Shin a'd, 's dh'fhaodhadh gu' beil aid [] sin fhathastaich." [*B.S. laughs.*] Phòs aid.



GILLE NAN COCHULLA CRAICINN

**Date: 24 September 1993**

**Collector: Carol Zall**

*[Recording begins a few minutes into the story.]*

.... gu' robh e a' dol dhachaigh, gu' robh e 'dol air ais.

'S dh'èirich e a' latha seo, 's thuirt e riuth', "Och uill," thuirt e, "bha si' glè mhath dhomh-as. Bha si' glè mhath," thuirt e, " 's tha mi mòran ann an, ann an comain airson sin a dhèanamh. Ach [feum'] mi nis dhol dhachaigh."

"O," thuirt i, "chan fholbh thu," thuirt a' chail' ris, "chan urra dhut folbh gus a' baist thu do mhac."

" 'S neònach mac e," thuirt es', "mac aon oidhch'."

"O," thuirt i ris, "bha thu seo," thuirt i, "latha agus bliadhn'. Bha thu bliadhn' agus lath' ann a' seo."

Uill, bhaist e sin 'mhac, 's thàinig e sin dhachaigh. 'S dar thàinig e dhachaigh, bha e air an oighreachd aige fhèin, 's.

Ach, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, fhuair e -- 'rìgh, fhuair e sgeul, gu' robh e ag iarraidh air dhol -- gu' robh aig' ri dhol gu bàrr Eilean na' Muc. 'S bha e ag iarraidh air Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn bhith cuide ris.

"O, uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "thèid mi, ma leigeas mo mhàthair leam a dhol, thèid mi ann. Ma gheobh -- ma their mo mhàthair gum faod mi dhol, thèid mi ann."

" 'S cà' i, cà' am faic mi do mhàthair?"

"Uill, chì thu i dar a bhios a' ghrian ag èirigh. Bios i 'na suidh' air tolmán uain' bhos cinn na mar'. 'S bios i 'cìr-- 'cìreadh a ceann."

Thàinig a' rìgh, 's chunnaic e i 'na suidh' mar a thuirt e, bhos cinn na mar-- 'mhuir i. Rug e air fhalt oirr'.

Thuirt i ris, thug i glaoth, "O, [] 'Fhinn," thuirt i, "tha fhios a'm gu dè tha thu ag iarraidh. Leig às do ghrèim. Tha thu 'gam chiùrradh."

"Cha leig," thuirt e rith', "gus an toir thu dhomh m'iartras."

"Uill," thuirt i ris, leigidh mi leat dhol a h-uile h-àit' air an t-saoghal cuide riut," thuirt i, "ach am bàrr Eilean nam Muc.

"Shin an dearbh àit' 'sa b'[...] mi a dhol," thuirt e rith'.

"Uill, uill, ma tha," thuirt i. "Leigidh mi leis a dhol. *[Pause.]* Ach [cuimhn'] seo," thuirt i, "ma bhios e beò, fàg na siùil tha ris a' bhàt' rith', ach ma bhios e marbh, cuir siùil dhubh rith'."

"O nì mi sin," thuirt e.

Ach, thàinig e nis gus an oighreachd aig a' rìgh 's. Bha [pause.] An fheadhainn bha ag obair air an àit', bha e 'toir' sgailc air fear an sin, 's sgailc air fear a' seo 's, bha e 'gam marbhadh.

Thuirt Seanagaidh Seanagal ris, "O," thuirt i ris a' rìgh, "Mur cuir thu air folbh an gille tha sin, cha bhi duin' a's an oighreachd agad-as nach bi marbh ac'."

" 'S dè nì sinn ris?"

"Cuir ri leum a' staing mhòr e, 'n aghaidh a chùlaibh, 's an aghaidh a bheulaibh e. 'S bios tilgeil na biodagan air, an aghaidh -- an aghaidh roinnibh, 's bios es' 'ga' tilgeil air ais oirbheas, an aghaidh, an aghaidh basaibh.

'S rinn e sin, bha e 'leum a' staing mhòr air a chùlaibh 's an aghaidh a bheulaibh, 's bha iad 'tilgeil na biodagan air 's, bha es' 'gan ceapadh 's bha e 'gan tilgeil air ais orr', an aghaidh basaibh. Bha e 'gam marbhadh.

" 'S dar thig e sin, cuir ri ruith ri Caoilt', ruith aodann na beinne."

Seo a rinn aid. Chuir iad ruith ri Caoilt' e. Char e as deaghaidh Chaoilt', 's bha slatag aig', 's thug e ghiogag air, air Caoilt', cùl an amhaich, 's rinn e fiadh dheth.

Agus. Thàinig e sin [pause] air ais gu 'mhàthair.

Ach thuirt a mhàthair ris, "Nach leig thu às Caoilt'? Cha do rinn Caoilt', cha d'rinn e, cha d'rinn e dòrainn sam bith ort. Leig às e."

"O, leigidh," thuirt e, "dar a thèid mi air ais."

Thàinig nis a' rìgh ga iarraidh rithistich, a' mac -- eh, athair, ga iarraidh a-rithistich.

'S thuirt e ris, "Cha tèid mi air ais," thuirt e, "mur fhaigh mi bhith 'nam stiùbhardach air an Fhèi-- air an, air an oighreachd a'ad."

"O gheobh," thuirt e.

Char iad sin air ais, bha e 'na stiùbhard air an oighreachd aig a' rìgh.

'S char e, 's fhuair e ... eh, Caoilt', 's rinn e fiadh -- thug e Caoilt' air ais. Rinn e duin' deth rithistich.

"O," thuirt Caoilt' ris, "o, dhuin'," thuirt es', "bu bhrèagha na caistealan a bh'agad. Bha àitean brèagha ann, bha mis' 'faicinn." [Pause.]

Thàinig an sin, gu' robh iad 'dol gu bàrr Eilean na' Muc, 's cò gheobhadh aid -- a' bàt' gheobhadh, o, am Maraiche Màirneal. Char iad gus a' Maraich', bha a' Maraich', bha e dall.

Thuirt a' Maraich' riuth' gu' faigheadh aid a' bhàt', "Thoir leis am bàt'," thuirt e ri', "tha i ann a' siud, [...] aig a' chladach i. Cuiribh fhèin mach i. Tha i bhàn aig a' chladach."

Ach, char aid a dh'fheuch', cha dèanadh aid *stem* dhen a' bhàt' chur mach, air a', air flod.

Thàinig e sin air ais 'ga iarraidh rithistich, a' rìgh 's. Thuirt e ris, "Cha tèid sin -- chan urr' dhuinn am bàt' a ghluas'd."

"Uill, uill," thuirt e, "thoir leis mi, thoir leis air làimh mi."

Thug e sin leis a' Maraich' air làimh, 's thug e gus a' chladach e.

'S thuirt a' Maraich' ris, "Cuir mo ghualainn ri cuinnlean a' bhàt'."<sup>1</sup>

Chuir e a ghualainn ri cuinnlean a' bhàt', 's thug e a' chiad [*shove*], chuir e trì fad fhèin mach air a' flod i.

"Nis," thuirt es'.

Dh'fholbh iad nis, nis bha ... a' tè bha am bàrr Eilean na' Muc, a' bhean a bh'ann, bha i 'sealltainn mach air an uinneig gu h-àird, 's thuirt i ri 'nighean, "Cha chreid mis'," thuirt i, "nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach 'Mharaiche Mhàirneal 'tighinn aon uair fhathastaich."

'S thàinig e, 'se a' Maraich' a bh'ann.

Agus. Dar a thàinig aid gus a' sin, "Nis," thuirt e, "chuir thu cuireadh agus cuid oidhch' oirnn, feumas thu a-nis," thuirt e, eh ... "taigh a thoir' dhuinn, gun dèan sinn ... eh ... [gheibh] sinn cadal 's [gus] a' faigh sinn biadh."

"O," thuirt i, "tha seann taigh ann a' sin," thuirt i, "ma thèid si' fhèin, 's ma ghlanas si' mach e."

"O," thuirt e ris na gillean aig', "ruithibh agus glanaibh a-mach an taigh tha sin, gus a' faigh sinn staigh e."

Chaidh iad mach 'ga ghlanadh ach, na h-uile smùr a thog aid dhen a' talamh, bha iad 'leum dhen a' -- an rud ac', 's bha e stìdig<sup>2</sup> air ais a-rithistich. 'S cha b'urr' dhoibh 'ghlanadh ach, char Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach 's ghlan e an taigh mach. Ghlan es' mach e.

'S nis char e gu tè bha ... bàrr Eilean nam Muc, 'boireannach bha am bàrr Eilean nam Muc, 's thuir' iad rith', "Chuir thu cuireadh agus cuid oidhch' oirnn. Feumas sinn nis tein' fhaighinn."

"O," thuirt i, "tha cruach mhòn' ann a' sin. Tha cruach mhòn' ann a' sin. Thoiribh mòn' às a', às a' chruach."

Thuirt a' rìgh ris na gillean aig', "O ruithibh 'fhearaibh," thuirt e riuth', "thoiribh staigh ultach mhòn', chuireas sinn air an tein'."

Char iad staigh ach, bha fear ann a' sin, fear beag ceann mòr air. 'S a h-uile fòid a bheireadh aid às a' chruach, bha e 'faighinn air mullach chinn aid. 'S thàinig iad staigh 's cha robh dad ac'. Ach char Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach, 's thug e leis staigh, thug e leis leth na cruach air a ghaoirdean. 'S chuir e tein' mòr air.

Nis, thàinig an sin 'n t-acras orr' 's, bha aid ag iarraidh rud ri ith'.

Thuirt aid rith' rithistich, "Chuir thu cuireadh 's cuid oidhch' oirnn, thoir thu nis dhuinn biadh a dh'itheas sinn."

"Uill, ma thèid sibh a-bhàn, tha tarbh air a' lòn. Tha a' tarbh air a' lòn," thuirt i. "Agus marbhaibh e 's, [gheobh -- bi] gu leòr feòil agai'."

<sup>1</sup>"*Cuinnlean a' bhàt'*": "the prow of the boat", *Cuinnlean* or *cuinnean*, more usually meaning "nostril," here takes the meaning "prow" when used of a ship.

<sup>2</sup>"*stìdig*": a Gaelicisation of "to stick". See fuller footnote in the transcription of the 1973 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*.

Thuir a' rìgh, "Bithibh 'dol 'ghillean, agus [marbhamhaid] a' tarbh tha sin. Bheir sinn pios dheth itheas sinn."

Char aid, och, dar char aid bhàn gus a' lòn far a' robh an tarbh, bha an tarbh 'cur [spuinnsean]<sup>3</sup> tein' á shròin. 'S ruag e air folbh aid.

"Ach," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "feumaidh mi fhèin dhol."

Char e ann nis a-bhàn gus a' lòn, 's fhuair e an tarbh, [bhual] e air a dhà adharc air. Thug e car dha. Chuir e 'adharc a's an talamh, 's chuir e an tarbh thairis, 's bhris e 'amhaich. Bhris e amhaich an tairbh 's.

"Nis," thuirt e riuth, "tha a-nis an tarbh marbh. Ruithibh 's thoiribh an craiceann deth 's, thoiribh leis a' lia-- liais<sup>4</sup> deiridh aig'."

Char iad sin a thoir' a' craiceann deth, dh'fholbh na gillean. Ach a h-uile bìdeag gheàrradh dhen a' chraic', bha e [*here one can hear a hand slap for rhythmic emphasis*] 'dol air ais a-rithistich. Bha e s-- 'dol air ais, dìreach stìsdig air ais a-rithisti'.

"Ach," thuirt a' rìgh, "gu dè a th'oirbh, nach [...], nach do mharbh e, nach do mharbh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn dhuì' e? 'S cinnteach gun toir sibh [...] an craiceann thoir' dheth, craiceann thoir' dheth."

Ach, chaidh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn bhàn rithistich 's, dh'fheann e a' tarbh, 's gheàrr a' lias dheth 's. Fhuair iad nis gu leòr dh'itheadh aid.

"Nis," thuirt a' rìgh ris a' gill, "Och," thuirt e ri Gill' nan Cochulla, "tha thu a' seo sgìth," thuirt e ris, "na rinn, na rinn thu a dh'obair an diugh," thuirt e, "ann a' seo. Ruith thus' laigh', agus caithrisidh mis' a' chiad ceann dhen oidhch'."

"O, cha chaith si', cha chaithris," thuirt a' r-- Gille nan Cochulla Crai'n. "Ruithibh sibh-s' a laigh', 's nì mis' caithris."

[Pause.]

Ach chaidh iad sin laigh', 's bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha e 'na, 'na dhùisg aig an tein' 's. Thàinig gnog gus an doras. Char e mach, bha, bha cailleach mhòr, mhòr, mhòr, chianail ann a' sin. 'S bha fìaclan innt', bha aid 'ga, bha aid coltach ri maide-ceangail.

Thuirt i ris, "Thig mach a' seo," thuirt i, "mharbh thu mo mhic, mharbh thu mo dhuin', mharbh thu mo mhac, mharbh thu m'oghachan, mharbh thu mo iar-oghachan, 's mharbh thu mo dhubh-oghachan. Ach thig mach agus feuch mis'."

Chaidh e sin mach gus a' chailleach bha seo, 's bha i fhèin 's e fhèin a' sabaid [ ]. Thug e togail rith', dhan a' chailleach mhòr. Leag e i, 's gheàrr e an ceann dith.

Dhùisg a' sin 'rìgh, 's char e mach ga amharc air 's, thuit e, thuit e thairis air a' chailleach.

<sup>3</sup>"spuinnsean": this word appears to mean something like "spumes" or "spouts". In the April 1993 recording of this story, the phrase used is "*spùtan teine*," "spouts of fire," while the November 1973 recording also has "*spuinnsean teine*".

<sup>4</sup>"liais": for "*lias*," "thigh".

"Hmm, hmm," thuirt e ris fhèin, "ged a bha sinn ann an cadal, cha robh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na chadal."

Agus. Thàinig a' sin 'n tìd' bhith 'dol air ais, 's fhuair aid sin 'm bàt' a-rithistich 's, thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn ris, "Nis," thuirt e, "dar a bhios sinn leth-sligh' ... thig meall dorch'," thuirt e, "bhon an taobh tuath. 'S èirichidh mis' 'nam mheall dorch' dhen t-soitheach. 'S bios sinn ann a' sin," thuirt e, "airson trì latha, 's trì oidhch'. Ach an ceann trì lath', sgaoilidh sinn, agus thig mis' bhàn gus a' t-soitheach," thuirt e, "gus a' bhàt'. Ach cuimhnich," thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "nach cum thu slige na sleagh rium, [nach cum thu -- cum--] nach cum thu roinn na slèigh rium, cum thu slige na sleagh rium dar thig mi a-bhàn. Uill, ma bhi-- thig mi bhàn," thuirt e, "air sin," thuirt e, "air a', air a' roinn aig', bidh mi marbh."

Agus.

"O tha, tha -- cumaidh a' sleagh riut, cumaidh sinn slige na sleagh riut."

'S bha iad sin mu leth, mu leth, leth sligh', 's dar a chual' e guth.

"Mac rìgh na Sorch, èirich an àird 's feuch buill' 's mis'."

'S dh'èirich es' 'na mheall dorch' dhen an t-soitheach. 'S mar a thuirt e, bha iad trì lath' 's trì oidhch' ann a' sin. 'S an ceann na trì lath' sgaoil aid, 's bha e sin bhàn, gus a' bhàt'. Ach leis a' *stir* a's a' robh a' rìgh, chum e roinn a' bhàt' ris. Thàinig e bhàn 's bha e, och, thuit e 's bha e marbh dar a thàinig e bhàn. 'S bha màthair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha i 'na suidh', bhos cinn na mar'.

" 'S math char dhut, 'Fhinn," thuirt i, "nach ann le do dheòin a rinn thu e, no chuirinn mis' thus' agus do bhàt'," thuirt i, "gus a' ghrunnd."

'S rug i air a' bhàt', 's thug i aon slaodadh air 's thug i staigh air a' chladach e.

'S thuirt i ris, "Cuir, cuir 'nam a-- 'nam, 'nam aparan e."

Chuir e sin, thuirt i, chuir e sin na siùil ... dhubh ris a' bhàt' mus do, mar a thuirt i, dar a bha - - mharbh e, 's eh, "Cuir 'nam aparan," 's chuir e sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'na h-aparan. 'S dh'fholbh i dhachaidh leis.

Char Gille nan Cochulla Craic', char e air ais, air ais, gu oighreachd a' rìgh, 's bha e ann a' sin.

Ach, "O," thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "feumaidh mi nis dhol," thuirt e, "agus ... mo bhràthair fhaicinn. Tha fhios a'd," thuirt e, "mharbh mi, mharbh mi fhèin mo bhràthair," thuirt e, "feumaidh mi nis folbh 's fhaicinn."

Agus.

"O," thuirt e, "ceart gu leòr."

Char e sin gus an taigh. Bha ceann dotaìr air stob a' sin, 's bha ceann dotaìr air stob a' seo. Thuirt e ris gun tàinig e, a shealltainn air a bhràthair.

"O," thuirt an tè -- thuirt a' boireannach ris, "nach eil thu 'faicinn," thuirt i, "na beil a' sin a chinn?"



"Och, uill," thuirt e, "chan fheàrr mo cheann-as na ceann fear eil'."

Thug e (*sic*) staigh e.

Thuirt e, "Thoiribh, thoiribh, gus a' rùm mis'."

Fhuair e grèim air an làimh aig', 's chuir e feòil air an làimh aig' 's, thug e leis e, bha e an sin 'buidhinn ris.

O chual' iad seo 's, bha iad sin toilichte, na boirionnaich, gu' robh e 'buidhinn ris, 's bha e beò, bha 'bhràthair beò.

"O," thuirt e (*sic*) sin, "rinn thu feum a' seo," thuirt i.

"Ah, uill," thuirt e, "rinn, 'se mis' mharbh e," thuirt e, " 's mis' a thug beò e."

Agus.

Nis, char e fhèin -- fhuair e ... gus a' rìgh, fhuair e fios gus a' rìgh rithistich. Thuirt e gu' robh aig' ri thighinn air ais, gus an oighreachd aig a' rìgh. 'S thuirt e, "Tha mi ag iarraidh mo bhràthair a thighinn cuide rium."

"O," thuirt a' rìgh, "tha thu deagh dì-bheatht', thu fhèin 's do bhràthair ri thighinn an seo," thuirt e, "cho fad 's a bhios sibh beò. Tha àit' a' seo dhut."

'S char e fhèin 's a bhràthair air ais gu oighreachd a' rìgh 's, bhiodh aid a' sealg a-mach a's a' mon' a h-uile latha aid fhèin 's a' rìgh, cuide ris a' rìgh, 's bha ... bha aid glè dhòigheil. Agus phòs Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, agus nighean a' rìgh rithistich. 'S bha es', bha e 'na rìgh òg, ann a' sin air an oighreachd sin, Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, mac rìgh na Sorch', 'se mac rìgh a bh'ann. Mac aon oidhch'. [*B.S. chuckles.*]

GILLE NAN COCHULLA CRAICINN

**Date: 2 July 1994**

**Collector: Carol Zall**

*[The story is preceded by some conversation about the story.]*

**B.S.:** Aye. Agus bha 'rìgh mach a' lath' seo, bha e mach 'sealg.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** 'S thuit ceò --

**C.Z.:** 'Seadh --

**B.S.:** 'S char e air chall. Cha robh fhios aig', cha dèanadh e 'dhachaidh dheth. Agus, chunnaic e solas, taigh. 'S rinn e air a' solas seo. Agus, eh, ruig e an taigh, ghnog e aig a' doras, thàinig, eh, boirionnach òg gus a' doras, o, thug i staigh e.

"O," thuirt i, "a' rìgh," thug i staigh e 's. Fhuair e 'dhèanamh dheth<sup>1</sup> gu math, 's fhuair e, a bhiadh 's leabaidh 's cadal 's.

Ach aon de na lathaichean dh'èirich e, 's thuirt e, "O, ma tha," thuirt e, "tha mi 'creidsinn gum bheil feum, feumaidh mis' bhith 'folbh dhachaidh gus an oighreachd agam fhèin."

"O," thuirt a', thuirt a' bhean ris, "Feumas thu do mac, do mac a bhaisteadh, mus, mu fholbh thu."

"Mo mhac," thuirt es', " 's neònach mac e, mac aon oidhch'. Mas e mac aon oidhch' a th'ann."

"O, chan e," thuirt i. "Bha thu a' seo," thuirt i, "bha thu lath', agus dà bhliadhn' ann, ann a' seo."

"O, an robh?" thuirt e.

"O, bha."

Chaidh e sin, bhaist e a mhac 's, dh'fholbh e air ais gus an taigh aig', gus an oighreachd aig'. Agus, nis, dh'iarr e 'mhac, fhaigheadh e gus a', an oighreachd aige fhèin e. 'S thàinig Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn cuide ris. Ach dar a thàinig Gille nan Coch' Craicinn, a' sluagh a bh'aig' -- na searbhaich a bh'aig', bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'toirt dòrn air fear a' seo, 's dòrn air fear a' sin dhiubh, 's bha e 'gam marbhadh.

'S thuirt, thuirt a' rìgh ri Seanagaidh Seanmhair, Cailleach nan Cearc, "O," thuirt a' rìgh, a' fear tha sin," thuirt a' rìgh, " 'balach tha sin, tha e 'marbhadh na bheil agam-sa dhe searbh', dhe luchd-sheirbhis."

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<sup>1</sup>"*Fhuair e 'dhèanamh dheth gu math*": B.S. uses this phrase to mean "he was treated well," "he was done well to"; it occurs in other recordings as well.

"Uill innsidh mis' dè a-nis a nì [thu]," thuirt i ris, "cuireas às dha. Cuir ri leum a' staing mhòr e, 'n aghaidh chùlaibh 's 'n aghaidh a bheulaibh e. 'S bios 'tilgeil na biodagan air, 'n aghaidh roinnibh, 's bios es' gan tilg' air ais oirbh-eas, 'n aghaidh basaibh."

Sin a rinn a' rìgh, chuir e ri -- leum a mhac, leum a' staing mhòr air ais 's air adhart, 'n aghaidh chùlaibh 's, 's bha iad 'tilg', bha es' 'gan ceapadh 's bha e 'gan tilgeil air ais orr'. 'S dar bha es' 'gan tilgeil air ais na -- na biodagan, bha e 'gam marbhadh. Ach. [Pause.]

"Nis, thig e sin," thuirt i, "cuir ri ruith ri a' fiadh, ri aodann na beinne."

Char e as dèidh a' fiadh, bha a' fiadh cho luath ris a' ghaoth. Char e as dèidh a' fiadh 's, rug e 's thug e ghiogag air, 's rinn e fiadh dheth. 'S adhraicean air.

Agus, eh. An sin, dh'iarr a' rìgh e gu' -- biodh e cuide ris. Uill thuirt e ris, [gu' fhuair] 'rìgh [...] cuireadh agus cui-- cuid oidch', airson a dhol gu bàrr Eilean Loch Le-- bàrr Eilean nam Muc.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** "Uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla, "thèid mi cuide riut," thuirt e, "a's a h-uile h-àit', saoilidh mi, ach, feumaidh mi ... mo mhàthair ... feumaidh mi, feumaidh mi mo mhàthair -- mo leigeil às, ma leigeas i, ma theireas i riu' nach urr' mi [dhol], cha tèid mi ann.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** " 'S cà' am faic mi do mhàthair?"

"O, chì thu," thuirt e, "dar a bhios a' ghrian ag èirigh, air tolm' gorm, bhos cinn na mar', bhos cinn na mar'. 'S bios i 'cìreadh a ceann."

'S dh'fholbh 'rìgh, 's char e a' seo bhos cinn na mar', 's chunnaic e màthair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn. 'S bha i a' cìreadh 'ceann. Rug e air fhalt oirr'.

"O, leig às do ghrèim, 'Fhionn," thuirt es' (*sic*), "tha fhios a'm dè tha thu ag iarraidh. Leig às do ghrèim" -- bha e 'ga ciùrradh, "tha thu 'gam chiùrradh," thuirt i. "Tha thu 'tarraing m'fhalt."

"Cha leig mi às mo ghrèim," thuirt es', "gus an inns' thus' dhomh-as, gus am faigh mis' Gille nan Cochulla Craic' a dhol cuide rium."

"Thèid e cuide riut," thuirt i, "a's a h-uile h-àit' a thogras thu, ach gu aon àit', gu Eilean nam Muc."

"Shin 'dearbh àit'," thuirt e, "a bheil agam-as ri dhol, ma tha."

Agus, eh.

"Och, ma tha," thuirt i, "bhiodh e 'dol cuide riut, ach seo, ma bhios," thuirt e (*sic*) [pause]

"ma bhios e marbh dar thig e air ais, cuireas thu siùil dhubh ris a' bhàt'. Ach ma bhios e beò, fàg na siùil geala rith'."

"O, fàgaidh, fàgaidh," thuirt e, "nì mi sin."

Thàinig e sin air ais, gus an oighreachd, 's thuirt e ris, Gille na' Co'l, "O, [...], thug do mhàthair an t-òrdugh dhomh, faodas thu dhol."

"O ma tha," thuirt e, "dh'fheumadh [gun ciùrradh thu], mas tug i an t-òrdugh dhut, dh'fheumadh [gun ciùrradh]."

"O cha do chiùrr," thuirt Fionn, "cha do chiùrr."

"O dh'fheumadh [gun ciùrradh thu]."

Ach dh'fholbh iad gu bàrr Eilean nam Muc co-dhiubh.

**C.Z.:** Dè tha "bàrr"? "Bàrr"?

**B.S.:** It's a point.

**C.Z.:** Aye.

**B.S.:** The point of the island.

**C.Z.:** Bàrr Eilean nam Muc.

**B.S.:** Aye. And, uh. Nis, dar a ruig iad, ruig iad an eilean. Chuir i -- an tè a bha 'sa chaisteal, chuir i mach 'ceann. 'S thug i glaoth ris, cha-- cheangail i na casan ac' ri, ri, ris an t-soitheach, ri ùrlar an t-soithich, *deck* an t-soithich. Thàinig iad nis staigh gu, gus a' *phier*.<sup>2</sup> Thuirt an tè a bha 'san taigh, chuir i a-mach na ceann a-rithist air an uinneag. "Tuasgail do gheasan, do gheasan," thuirt i, " 'Fhionn."

"Cha tuasgail," thuirt e', " 's tu 's luaith' a chuir iad, tuasgail thus' shuas."

Dh'tuasgail i sin buinn na casan ac' bho *deck* an t-soitheach, 's cheangail Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn na h-- na, na h-uinneagan -- na -- na cinn aca-s' ris na h-uinneagan.

"Uill a-nis," thuirt a' rìgh rith', "bhon a chuir thu cuireadh agus cuid oidhch' oirnn tighinn a' seo -- cà' beil sinn 'dol dh'fuireach? Bheil taigh agad?"

"O, tha seann taigh ann a' sin," thuirt i, ma thèid si' fhèin agus ghlanas si' mach e. Tha an taigh math gu leòr," thuirt i, "'s tha, tha gu leòr tein' ann a' sin cuideachd, 's cru-- cruach mòn' ann a' sin 's, gu leòr tein' agai' 's, ma ghlanas si' an taigh mach," thuirt i.

"O," thuirt a' rìgh ris na gillean aig', "Ruith' agus glanaibh a-mach an taigh sin."

Char iad uileag ga ghlanadh mach, ach na h-uile *stitch*, *shovel* thog aid dheth, bha e 'tuiteam dheth, 's bha e stìsdig<sup>3</sup> air an ùrlar rithistich. Och, thàinig iad sin air ais, gus a' rìgh.

"Ach, cha b'urrainn dhuinn a ghlanadh," thuirt iad.

Ach thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "Thèid mi 's glanaidh mis' e."

Char es' mach 's cha robh e [] fad' 'sam bith dar a ghlan e an taigh 's.

Thug e glaoth orr' staigh: "Thigibh staigh a-nis," thuirt e.

O, thàinig iad nis staigh, 's thàinig a' rìgh a-staigh cuideachd, Fionn òg.

Agus, "Nis," thuirt a' rìgh riuth', "ruithibh agus thoiribh staigh ultach mhòn' ás a' chruach, mhòn'."

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<sup>2</sup>"*gus a' phier*": "to the pier".

<sup>3</sup>"*stìsdig*": a Gaelicisation of "to stick". See fuller note in transcription of 1973 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*.

O char iad staigh 's, char iad gus a' chruach, 's na h-uile fòid a thog aid dhen a' bhòrd, bha iad 'faighinn fòid air mullach a' chinn, bha e 'toir [...]. Thàinig aid air ais, thuirt iad, "Chan urr' dhuì' moin' -- [cha tig i ...]. Chan eil tein' feum oirnn. Chan eil sinn fuar ann."

Agus, char Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach, 's bha fear beag aig a', aig, aig a' chruach, 's ceann mòr air.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** 'S rug e air, 's thug e sgleoc às, bhuail e an ceann deth. 'S thug e staigh ultach mhòn', 's chuir e tein' mòr air. Bha a' rìgh 'ga gharadh fhèin ris a' tein', tein' [...]. Thàinig a' sin an tè bha -- a's a' -- bàrr Eilean, Eilean nam Muc, thàinig i staigh 's, thuirt a' rìgh rith', "Cò tha 'dol a thoir dhuinn biadh? Cò tha --"

"Tha," thuirt i, "tha tarbh air, air a' lòn ann a' sin, agus ma thèid si' 's marbhas si' an tarbh, an tarbh, gheobh si' an fheòil aig an tarbh."

"*All right.* Ruithibh," thuirt 'rìgh ris na gill', "ruithibh gillean, agus, marbhaibh an tarbh tha sin. 'S thoiribh an àird an ceathramh dheth, agus thoiribh si' na -- airson a ròisteadh air a' ... [*sentence trails off*]."

Ach chaidh iad bhàn ach, dar chunnaic an tarbh aid, ruag an tarbh air folbh aid, bha tein' 'tighinn á 'shròin, bha e 'cur spùtan tein' á 'shròin.

Ach thàinig na gillean air ais, "Ach," thuirt e (*sic*), "chan urrainn mi (*sic*), chan eil an t-acras oirnn, 'Fhionn."

Och, char a' sin Gille-- och, thuirt Gille nan Co'l, "Feumaidh mi fhèin a dhol."

Char Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn fhèin bhàn, 's fhuair e grèim air, air a dhà adhairc, 's thug e car dha, an adharc, [shtic]<sup>4</sup> an adharc a's an tàmait, chuir e car dheth fhèi' 's bhris e 'amhaich, bhris an tarbh 'amhaich. 'S gheàrr e a' lias deiridh dheth, 's thug e an àird i. Thilg e air a' bhòrd dhoibh.

"Sheo a-nis, thoiribh an craiceann dhe sin."

Char iad le sgian, 's bha iad 'toir' a' chraiceann dheth, h-uile bideag a ghearradh aid dheth, bha e 'dol air ais rithistich. Agus. Ach, [...] Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn deth 's, chuir e air a' phan e 's, ròist e e 's, bha iad 'g ith' a' biadh. Feòil 's aran 's [...]. Buntàt'.

Agus. Thàinig nis tìd' dhol a chadal, bhith 'dol laigh'.

Thuirt a' rìgh ri Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "Och ruith thus' laigh'," thuirt e, "tha thu sgìth," thuirt e, "na rinn thu a dh'obair. Tha thu sgìth, ruith thus' laigh'," thuirt e, "an toiseach."

"O, cha tèid," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "Ruithibh sibh-s' laigh' an toiseach, ruithibh si', sibh-s' laigh' an toiseach, gabhaibh *rest*. Agus caithris' mis' 'chiad treis dhen oidhch'."

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<sup>4</sup>"*shtic*": possibly a Gaelicisation of "stick," here lenited to indicate the past tense: "stuck".



Bha e an sin, an sin-ach, an ceann treis an dèidh sin dar a bha iad na' -- an fheadhainn eil 'nan cadal, thàinig [B.S. makes a knocking sound five times with his tea cup on the table] gus an doras.

"Mharbh thu mo mhac, mharbh thu mo oghaichean, mharbh thu mo dhubh-oghaichean, 's mharbh thu mo, mo iar-oghaichean. Ach thig mach," thuirt i, "agus feuch mis'."

"O thig, 'Chaillich," thuirt e.

Chaidh sin Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn mach 's, char e mach, 's chunnaic e, bha cailleach ann a' sin ['s thuirt e] bha e -- bha i cho mòr ri, ri mòn'. 'S ghobh e fhèin 's a' chailleach dha chèil', 's bha e 'g ràdh gu' robh fiacalan a's a' -- doras a beul,<sup>5</sup> dèanadh e maide-ceangail, bha iad cho fad'. Ach, thog e an togail ud, dhan a' challeach mhòir 's, sgud e an ceann dith.

An sin, 'sa mhadainn tràth, dh'èirich a' rìgh. 'S char a' rìgh mach, char e mach 'ga amharc air, char e a-mach a *relievig* e fhèin<sup>6</sup> dhe 'chuid uisg'. 'S thuit e thairis air a' chailleach.

"He-e-h," thuirt e, "[...] Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 'laigh'. Bha fhios aig-eas gu' robh seo 'tighinn. O, bha," thuirt e.

Agus.

Nis, thàinig a-nis 'tìd', thuirt a' rìgh, gu' biodh iad 'dol air ais, làrna-mhàireach. Bha iad 'folbh. 'S char a' rìgh, 's thug e taing dha -- dhan a' bhoirionnach bha ann a'-- 'san eilean, airson ... cho càirdeil 's a bha i, tug i taigh 's biadh 's deoch dhoi'.

'S thug a' rìgh taing agus, "Bidh sinn nis 'folbh," thuirt e, "bidh sinn 'fàgail an eilean. Bidh sinn 'dol air ais gus an oighreachd."

Char iad nis staigh air a' bhàt', air an t-soitheach. 'S dar a bha iad staigh air a' mhuir, thàinig Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 's thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "Nis, rìgh," thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "dar a bhios sinn leth sligh' ... thig meall dorch," thuirt e, "bhos cinn a' bhàt', 's èirichidh mis'," thuirt e, "nam mo mheall dhen t-soicheach. 'S bidh sinn trì lath' 's trì oidhch' an àird sin," thuirt e, "a's a', a's an iarmailt, 'sabaid. An ceann trì lath'," thuirt e, "sgaoilidh sinn. Agus thig mis', bidh mis' 'tighinn air ais." 'S thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "Cuimhnich," thuirt e, "gun cum thu ... eh,

<sup>5</sup>This phrase -- *doras a' beul* -- literally "the door of her mouth" (i.e., the front part of her mouth) is an interesting one. I have come across the same phrase, used in the same scenario, in the story *Mar a Chaidh Fionn do Righeachd nam Fear Mòra* in J. G. Campbell 1891: 175 - 191. The story as printed is, according to Campbell, "from very full notes taken of the tale" from Murdoch M'Intyre of Tiree in January 1869, and the wording used is as follows: "An ath-oidhche, thàinig cailleach mhòr gu tìr, agus dheanadh an fhiacail a bha 'n dorus a beòil cuigeal" (189) which Campbell translates as "The next night a Big Hag came ashore, and the tooth in the front (literally door) of her mouth would make a distaff" (181). Here not only do we have the same "*doras a beòil*" phrase but also the image of huge teeth and their comparison to a large object. Furthermore, the hag goes on to address and challenge the hero by declaring that he has killed her husband and son, much as she does in Brian's story. The hag says "Mharbh thu m' fhear agus mo mhac." While I do not know the relation between Brian's stories and the story in *Waifs and Strays*, it is interesting to note the similarity in language and to find yet another indication that Brian's use of language is highly conservative and rooted in traditional idiom. We can only speculate as to how many of Brian's colourful turns of phrase are actually an echo of the voices of storytellers of the past.

<sup>6</sup>Gaelicisation: "to relieve himself".

slige na sleagh rium. Na cum roinn a' bhàt' rium, cum eh, cùlaibh a' bàt' ris. Dar thig mi bhàn," thuirt e.

"O, cumaidh, cumaidh," thuirt a' rìgh.

'S bha màthair Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha i 'na suidh', bhos cinn na mar', 's bha i 'sealltainn air, air a' bhàt'.

'S thàinig a' guth bha siod, "Mac rìgh na Sorch, èirich an àird a' seo, agus feuch mis'."

"Ha, ha," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "cha bu chath gu seo e."

'S thuirt a' rìgh ristich, "Och, och, tha mis' ag ràdh 'Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn' ri duin' nas àrd na mi fhèin," thuirt e.

'S bha a màthair, dar a bha màthair Gille nan Coch' 'na suidh' air -- bhos cinn na màr', thug i glaoth ris, chuir e -- bha siùil, chuir e na siùil, leis na [staidhs]<sup>7</sup> dìreach e, dar a bha iad a' sgaoileadh, chum e slige na sleagh ris, na sleagh ris, 's dar a thàinig e bhàn, bha e marbh. Thuirt es' ... ris a' [chrainn],<sup>8</sup> 's bha e marbh.

Thug a màthair sùil air, "O 's math a char dhut, 'Fhinn," thuirt i, "nach e le do dheòin a rinn thu e. Nam b'e, chuirinn-eas thu fhèin agus do shoitheach," thuirt i, "gu' grun-- grunnd a' chuan."

'S ruig i air a' t-soitheach 's, tharraing i staigh gu 'chladach i.

"Seo," thuirt i, "cuir 'nam aparan e."

'S chuir e na cnàimhean 's na rud' a's a h-aparan, 's dh'fholbh i. Chaidh i dhachaidh leis.

Char a-nis Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, bha ... 'se a bhràthair a bh'ann.

Ah uill, bha e sin air a', air an Fhèinn 's, thuirt e ris a' rìgh, "Uill," thuirt e, "feumaidh mis' dhol nis," thuirt e, "rinn mis' na bha sin dhuì'-s'," thuirt e, "na bha sin a dh'obair dhu'. Feumaidh mis' folbh," thuirt e "a-nis agus mo bhràthair a thoir' beò."

Bha e 'na dhotair. Ruig e a' taigh aig a', aig a', aig a' mhàthair. 'S bha ceann air stob a' sin, 's bha ceann dotair air stob a' seo. 'S thuirt e rith', gun tàinig e staigh airson, eh ... a bhràthair.

"O," thuirt i, "bha iomadach dotair a' seo, shin a'd a' cinn mach sin," thuirt i, "bheil thu ag iarrr'-- bheil thus' ag iarraidh do cheann bhith mach air stob mar sin?"

"O, uill," thuirt e, "chan fheàrr, chan fheàrr mo cheann-as na ceann fear eil'."

Char e gus a' rùm 'sa robh a bhràthair 'na laigh', 's bha e 'bruidhinn ris. Chuir e craiceann air a' làimh 's, chuir e feòil air a' làimh aig', aig a' bhràthair, chuir e feòil air a' ghaoirdean 's air a' bhodhaig 's air a' aodann.

Thug e sin glaoth air a mhàthair, "Trobbhai'," thuirt e. "Trobb' gus a' faic si' nis e," 's, thàinig e 's bha e 'bruidhinn rith'.

"O," thuirt i, "[se] seo," thuirt i, "rud tha brèagha."

Agus. Bha an sin e fhèin 's a bhràthair 'bruidhinn, bha iad 'bruidhinn ri chèil' 's.

<sup>7</sup>"staidhs": Gaelicisation of "stays," a nautical term for ropes used with the masts of a ship.

<sup>8</sup>"chrainn": for "chrann" ("mast").

"Làrna-mhàireach" -- thuirt e gu' robh e 'dol dhachaidh gus an oighreachd aig a' rìgh.

Agus thuirt a mhàthair ris, "Nach fhuirich thu seo fhèin?"

"O, chan fhuirich," [thuirt] e, "chan fhuirich mi seo," thuirt e. Thuirt e, "Tha, tha tuillidh [spors] agam air, air, air, an -- an -- a' sealg 's, aig an Fhèinn aig a', aig a' rìgh," thuirt e. "Thèid mi air ais," thuirt e.

"Ah, uill, uill," thuirt 'mhàthair ris, "chì sinn thu dar thig thu rithistich."

Agus, thàinig a' rìgh air ais. 'S bha e ag iarraidh Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn bhith 'na ghille aige, air an Fhèinn aig a' rithistich.

"Uill," thuirt Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, "cha tèid mis' air ais gus an Fhèinn a'd nas lugh' na gheobh mis' bhith 'na mo stiùbhardach air an Fhèinn agad. 'S ma gheobh mi bhith 'nam stiùbhard air an Fhèinn a'd, air an Fhèinn a'd, thèid mi air ais, thig mi cuide riut."

"O, bidh, gheobh thu, gheobh thu," thuirt e, "bi thus' 'tighinn."

'S thuirt a mhàthair ris, "Och, eh, nach leig thu às ... eh ... Fionn -- eh ... Caoilt'," thuirt i, "nach leig thu às Caoilt', cha d'rinn Caoilt' dòrainn 'sam bith ort, leig às es'."

Och, fhuair e sin Caoilt', 's thug e -- thug e ghiog eil' às, rinn e duin' deth rithistich.

"O," thuirt Caoilt' ris, "[...] agad fhèin bha na caistealan bha siod, bha caistealan brèagha agad."

"Robh thu toilichit ann a' siod, eh, 'Chaoil'?"

"O, bha mis' glè thoilichte."

"Och, ma tha," thuirt e, "tha thu a-nis air ais," thuirt e, " 'nad shearbaiseach air an Fhèi[nn], 'na do ghill'-obraich."

'S bha Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn 's a' rìgh -- 's 'athair -- a' rìgh, 'athair, bha aid ann a' sin, 's bha aid 'folbh a' sealg, 's 'marbhadh fèidh, 's 'marbhadh na h-uile dad a gheobhadh aid. 'S shin agad cheann a' rìgh, bha e fhèin 's a mhàthair beò an sin rithistich, bhiodh e 'dol a shealltainn air a mhàthair an dràs' 's a-rithistich. [Pause.] Ach bha es' 'na stiùbhardach air an Fhèinn, air an Fhèinn. A' [prìomh] stiùbhard aig, aig a' rìgh.

## STÒIRIDH LADHAIR

**Date:** 1974

**Collector:** Donald Archie MacDonald

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1974/32/A4**

Uill, 'se, eh, rìgh a bh'ann 's, eh, theirig e, bha gill' aig'. Agus bha 'gill' 'dol a h-uile lath', h-uile madainn, 'dol go tolman uain' bha sin bhos cinn na mar'. Agus bha e 'dèanamh cùmh' agus bròn airson 'athar.

Agus, eh, dar bha e 'dèanamh seo 'latha seo, thàinig fear eil', 's leum e air. Agus, eh, fhuair a' sin mac a' rìgh gu 'chasan, 's bha aid a's na grèimean, 's leag e 'm fear a leum air. Agus, eh, bha e 'dol a thoir' *mauling* dha 's.

"O," thuirt e ris, "na dèan sin, na dèan sin," thuirt e. "Leig an àird mi. 'S bidh mi 'na mo ghille agad, airson aon lath' deug dhe mo shaoghail."

"Uill, uill," thuirt a', mac a' rìgh a-rithis', "mus leig mi an àird thu, c'ainm a th'ort?"

"Tha Ladhar," thuirt es', "Ladhar Bliadhn'."

"Eirich an àird, ma tha, Ladhar Laochain, agus, tha thu 'na mo ghille agam."

Bha e sin 'na ghille air a', air a', an oighreachd aig', 's bha e 'dèanamh a h-uil' càil bh'aig', aig' ri dhèanamh 's.

Agus, eh, chaidh sin mac a' rìgh, bha e riamh 'dol gus an àit' bha seo 's dèanamh -- 'caoineadh airson 'athar. 'S 'lath' bha seo, thàinig boirionnach. 'S dh'fhoighnich i ris -- o boirionnach brèagha a bh'ann 's -- thuirt i ris, "Dè tha thu 'dèanamh seo?"

"Uill," thuirt es', "tha mi 'dèanamh cùmh' agus bròn airson m'athar."

"Och," thuirt i, "cha toir sin sian feum dhut. Seo," thuirt i, "èirich an àird agus, tha cairtean agam a' seo, 's cuiridh sinn gèam air cairtean."

"O, glè mhath."

Bha e sin a' cluich air na cairtean 's, choisinn es' co-dhiubh.

'S thuirt is' ris, "Uill, bhon a choisinn thu, eh, tog brìgh do chluich."

'S thuirt es' rith', "Tha mo rogha each agad orm."

"Uill," thuirt a' boirionnach ris, "tha thus' -- bios thu duilich ri do thoileachdainn, na tha each agam-as, air a ... nì dhut."

'S thug i sin dan a' stàbull aic' e 's, chunnaic e, chan fhac' e leithid de dh'eich riamh 's a chunnaic e, eich bhrèagha, dhen a h-uile sèors'. Char e trompa, ach bha aon ann, 's bha fear a' seo 's fear a' sin 'toir' *kick* oirr' 's toir teum às (*sic*).

"Och," thuirt e rith', "bheir mi leis an tè seo. Uill, eh, tha an fheadhainn eil' rith', agus, eh, bheir mi leis is'."

Agus, eh, o glè mhath. Thug e sin leis i, 's thug e mach às a', geat' a' phairc i. 'Se each brèagha, brèagha a bh'ann, agus 'se buidhe -- 'sann buidhe theireadh sinne a-nis, stiall a's an druim aic'.

Agus, eh, bha a' sin sin aig', 's bha, làrna-mhàireach, bha e a's an aon àit', 's thàinig i rithistich, a' boirionnach bha seo. 'S bha gèama chairtean ac'. 'S choisinn es' co-dhiubh.

'S thuirt i ris, "Tog brìgh do chluich."

"Tha mo rogha bean agad orm -- agam ort."

"Uill, tha thu glè dhuilich ri do thoileachdainn na bheir mis' bean dhut."

Thug is sin a-staigh e, dh'àit' a' sin e, 's och, bha de bhoirionnach ann, an t-uamhas dhiubh. Agus bha aon chaileag ann, 's bha tè sin 'toir' sguids le searadair oirre, 's bha tè a' seo 'toir' sguids oirr'-s'. Thug e sin sùil --

"Och," thuirt e, "bheir mi leis an tè seo. Uill, tha càch rith', agus bheir mi leis às a' rathad i."

Thug e sin leis i 's, 's dar a thug e mach i, às an taigh i, o 'se boirionnach brèagha, brèagha, cail' bhrèagha, bhrèagha a [bh'innt']. 'S phòs e fhèin 's is'.

Agus. Eh, a' lath'-- an ath lath' dha bhith air 'dèanamh cùmh' 's bròn airson 'athar, thàinig a' boirionnach bha seo a-rithistich.

"O," thuirt i ris, "tha thu seo an diugh rithistich."

"O," thuirt e, "tha mi seo an diugh rithistich."

"O, ma tha," thuirt i, "chan eil na cairtean agam an diugh. 'Se th'agam a' diste."

"Och," thuirt e, "nì na distean a' gnothach."

Char iad sin, bha iad 'cluich air na distean ach, choisinn is', am boirionnach.

'S thuirt es' rith' a' dearbh rud bha is' ag ràdh ris, "Tog brìgh do chluich."

"Uill, togaidh," thuirt i. "Tha mi 'cur mo chrosan 's mo ghea-- gheasan ort, trì buaraichean matha sìdh, nach stad oidhch' a's gach taigh thu gus am faigh thu dhomh-as fios feagal an aon sgeul."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Tha mi 'cur mo chrosan 's mo ghea-- gheasan ort, trì buaraichean matha sìdh, nach stad oidhch' a's gach taigh thu gus am faigh thu dhomh-as...": This is Brian's version of a widespread be-spelling formula, which could be roughly translated as follows: "I am putting my crosses and spells on you, the three fetters of the fairy [women/mothers], that you will not stop more than a night in any house until you bring me [+ the object of the quest]." Brian's phrase "*matha sìdh*" probably evolved from an earlier phrase such as "*mnatha sìdh*" ("fairy women"), an example of which can be found in Bruford's 1969 discussion of the formula (pg. 196); or from "*màthraichean sìdh*" ("fairy mothers"), an example of which can be found in MacNeil 1987: 52.

In his discussion of be-spelling formulae, J.G. McKay (1940: 505) explains the reference to the fairy women's cow fetters as follows: "The dreaded fairy-woman is also invoked against him. If he failed [to obtain the object demanded], she was to meet him, and strike him with the nine cow fetters which she carried. It must be explained here that even the ordinary cow fetter or cow spangle of ordinary mortals was a most ominous instrument.... If struck by them a hero was supposed to be rendered so awkward and silly, so fey and unlucky, that the veriest scum of the populace would be able to overcome him in battle, and take his ear, and his head, and his means of life from him."



Agus, thuirt i, thuirt e rith' rithist, "An d'fhuair gin riamh e?"

"Cuid a fhuair, 's cuid nach d'fhuair."

Thàinig e sin air ais 's, dh'innis e seo dha Ladhar.

Agus, eh, dar a dh'innis e dha, "Och, thuirt mis' riut," thuirt Ladhar, "mus fhàgadh thus' an tè bha sin, gun dèanadh i èiginn dhut. 'S tha seo, tha seo 'dol a shìneachdainn."<sup>2</sup>

Ach, dh'èirich iad sin a's a' mhadainn, 's chuir e an diollaid air a' ... bheothach aig', 's chuir Ladhar a dhiollaid air a thè fhèin. 'S thug Ladhar leis a' chruit-chiùil aig'. 'S ghobh iad nis a' rathad 's, bha eòin bheag a' rathaid 'dèanamh nid air mullach a' chinn 's bha clachan beag a' rathaid 'dèanamh nid air muin an casan,<sup>3</sup> gus an tàinig aid gus an àit' a bha seo. Agus, eh, thug Ladhar mach a' chruit-chiùil aig' 's thug e sgàl aisd'. Chuir a h-uile gin dhiubh mach an cinn, às an àit' bha seo, agus àit' rìgh bh'ann. 'S thilg aid fras airgead orr'. Chuir Ladhar 'làimh 'na phòcaid, 's thilg e fras òir air ais dhoibh.<sup>4</sup>

Agus, bha iad a' sin ag iarraidh cairtealan na h-oidhch'. Fhuair iad sin. Bha iad sin, 'se --. Agus, eh, dh'èirich Ladhar troimhn oidhch', agus char e gus a' rìgh. Bha a' rìgh air a leabaidh. Agus thuirt Ladhar ris, "Mur a h-innis thu dhomh-as," thuirt e ris, "gu dè thachair a' seo," thuirt e, "fios fheagain<sup>5</sup> an aon sgeul, gearraidh mi an ceann dhìot."

O cha robh 'rìgh airson innis dha, ach, eh, bho dheireadh dh'innis e.

"O, uill," thuirt a' rìgh ris, "innsidh mis' dhut sin. Bha sinn ann a' seo," thuirt e, "mi fhèin agus, eh, na g-- eh ... an fheadhainn bhon àit'," thuirt e. "Cha robh fhios againn dè bha sinn 'dèanamh ruinn fhèin. Agus, thàinig seannach," thuirt e, " 's bhuail i h-iorball orm-as," thuirt

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As for the object of the quest in this story, "*fios feagal an aon sgeul*" ("true(?) knowledge of the one tale"), see the section on "Learning and Remembering Formulaic Language" in Chapter Three for a discussion of this term and Brian's understanding of it.

<sup>2</sup>"*Sìneachdainn*": "to start".

<sup>3</sup>Brian has explained this travel formula to me as follows: "Well, when he was walking along, he was walking that long, you see, that the stonies was making beds in the soles of his feet, and the little birds of the air was making nests in the top of his head, in the hair" (13 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2).

The travel formula is one of the few pieces of *non-dialogue* traditional set language which Brian uses which is recognisably from the "common stock" of storytelling language; it is also one of the longest non-dialogue formulae which he uses. (See Chapter Four for an extended discussion of Brian's use of language). Brian's uncle, Ailidh Dall, uses the same formula in his 1957 recording of *Stòiridh Ladhair* (SA 1957/42/B2), his exact wording being as follows: "*Bha na clachan beaga rathaid a' dèanamh nead am bonn an casan 's bha na h-eòin bheag an adhair a' dèanamh nead am mullach an cinn. Bha gach eun 'gobhail fasgadh ach cha robh fasgadh ann gus do ruig taigh eile ann a' sin.*" ("The little stones of the road were making a nest in the soles of their feet and the little birds of the air were making a nest in the tops of their head. Every bird was taking shelter but there was no shelter [to be had] until [they] reached another house there.") (Transcribed by Ian Paterson of the School of Scottish Studies). The formula is also used by Brian's cousin, Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord (see Chapter Four for more details on Alexander Stewart of Muir of Ord).

<sup>4</sup>Here B.S. again uses a known motif, that of people throwing "a shower of silver" (presumably coins) on Ladhar, and Ladhar's throwing "a shower of gold" back to them. The motif also occurs in one of Ailidh Dall's recordings of the story (SA 1957/36/A1). Like the travel formula cited above, this detail serves to ornament the story with a memorable image rather than to advance the action of the story in any crucial way.

<sup>5</sup>In other instances of this phrase, B.S. pronounces this word as *feagal*.

e, "a's a' fìaclan. 'S chaidh mis' agus mo ghillean," thuirt e, "as a dèidh. 'S mharbh i na h-uile gin againn," thuirt e, "an t-àit' a ruig aid." Thuirt e, "char aid, 's bha aid 'dèanamh cluich an ubhail<sup>6</sup> ruinn. Agus bha iad," thuirt e, " 'cur bior an àird a shròin. Agus, eh, bha aid," thuirt e, " 'ga na' ròstadh air an tein'," thuirt e. " 'S dar char mis'," thuirt a' rìgh, "chur air a' bhior, shleapaig<sup>7</sup> mis' dheth, agus sin a'ad," thuirt e, "fhuair mis' air ais an seo, ach tha thu fhèin 'faicinn, cha do chuir mis' cairt làimh<sup>8</sup> riamh [na] mo laimh. 'S shin a'ad," thuirt e, "fios feagal an aon sgeul."

Agus, eh, dar bha e 'g inns' seo dha, thàinig a' seannach a-rithistich 's, rinn i seo air ... air, eh, Ladhar. Thug Ladhar glaodh ris a', mac a' rìgh, bha cuide ris. Lean aid 'beothach bha seo, gus a' tàinig i gu àite caol, fad', dubh. Agus, char iad staigh. Agus ... cha robh iad fad' staigh, dar a thàinig an fheadhainn a bha -- an tè bha seo a-staigh 's, shìn i -- Och, cò dhèanadh cluich an ubhail riuth'?

"O nì, nì mis'," thuirt Ladhar. "Nì mis' cluich an ubhail riut."

Agus, seo, seo a rinn e. Bha aid 'tilgeil na ballachan phuinnsean air, air, air Ladhar, bha Ladhar 'ga cheapanadh air bàrr na sgian aig', 's bha e 'ga thilgeil orr' air ais, 's bha e 'gam marbhadh, gus do mharbh e 'n tè bho dheireadh dhiubh, 'fear bho dheireadh dhiubh.

Agus, eh, chaidh iad sin air ais, gus a', an oighreachd aca fhèin rithistich, bha sin, eh, a' chiad rud dhe -- shin agai' fi-- fios feagal a', an aon sgeul, fhuair e sin 's dh'innis e nis dhan--dhith-eas, dè thachair dhan 'rìgh bha seo, 's ciamar a fhuair e. Ach nis, dè an ath rud, ach chan eil cuimhn' agam air, air, air a' -- bho chaob sin dith, shin far a' robh mi 'faighinn *stuck*. Chuir i air folbh a-rithisti' e, dh'iarraidh, eh, ceann fear agus filidh. Ach seo, chan eil cuimhn' agam air sin.

**D.A.M.** Ceann fear agus filidh.

**B.S.** Ceann fear agus filidh. 'S chan fhaodadh gin bhith cuide ris ach, eh, e fhèin. Chan fhaodadh e Ladhar thoir leis. Chan fhaodadh e creutair thoir leis ach e fhèin. Ach seall, cha, chan eil cuimhn', cuimhn' agam, ged a bheireadh si' an ceann dith, ciamar a bha ceann fear agus filidh. Eh, eh, thàinig e, ach tha fhios a'm air an deireadh aig a' stòiridh.

**D.A.M.:** 'Seadh.

**B.S.:** Eh, dar a thàinig e air ais, agus ceann fear agus filidh aig', bha ceann fear agus filidh aig' [da] 'tè. 'S dar a thàinig e, cha robh e a' faithneachdainn 'n àit' aig' fhèin.

<sup>6</sup>"cluich an ubhail": literally "the apple game". In a note to a version of *Stòiridh Ladhair* printed in MWH 1, J.G. McKay states that "Throwing a brazen apple at an enemy, who did his best to catch it and hurl it back, may have been one of the accomplishments of a great warrior...." (1940: 252). There is also more discussion of "apple games," as well as other interesting points, following the story on pages 275-276.

<sup>7</sup>Gaelicisation: "I slipped".

<sup>8</sup>"cairt làimh": literally "a hand card" but presumably a playing card.

Ach choinnich Ladhar e, 's thuirt e ri Ladhar, "Glèidh Dia mi, Ladhar" thuirt e, "dè dh'èirich, de dh'èirich dhan àit' ? Chan eil mis' 'faithneachdainn *bit*, *bit* dheth. Chan eil coill' ann, 's chan eil dad eil' ann."

"O, mis, mis," thuirt e, "rinn e," thuirt Ladhar, "chuir mis' na h-uile h-àit' 'na thein'. Chuir mi na monaidhean a'd [a] thein', air a shon-as. Air [...] son," thuirt e, "gu' tigeadh si' air ais." Agus: "An d'fhuair thu e? D'fhuair thu a' ceann?"

"O, fhuair," thuirt a' -- mac a' rìgh.

"Thoir thus' dhomh-as e."

'S fhuair -- thug e an' ceann leis -- 'se ceann fomhair a bh'ann -- dha Ladhar.

Thuirt e, "Bheir mis' dhith a chuideam 's 'fhaireachdainn."<sup>9</sup>

'S char Ladhar bhàn leis a' cheann 's, thug e dìreach [*hesitates slightly*] *balong*<sup>10</sup> oirr' fhèin leis a' cheann 's, mharbh e i fhèin cuideachd.

"Sheo a-nis, cha chuir i dragh ort tuillidh," thuirt e.

Shin a'd an ceann aic' ach, tha pìos eile nach eil cuimhn' agam air. Fhios a'd, eh, dar a char -- dh'fholbh e 's gus an tàinig e air ais an darna triob, ag iarraidh ceann-- cha -- cha -- tha mi 'fàs *stuck*, gus an, an -- dh'fheuch mi cho fad-- chan eil cuimhn' idir agam.

**D.A.M.:** Ach 'se seo an deireadh aice.

**B.S.** Shin agai', sin agai' an deireadh aic'.

**D.A.M.** Leis a' cheann fear agus filidh.

**B.S.** Leis a' cheann aig fear agus filidh. Choinnich Ladhar e 's, bha -- chan aithneadh e a' t-àit', leis na chuir e 'na thein' e. Chuir e 'na thein' na coilltean 's, eh, h-uile dad a bh'aig'. 'S thug e, thug e an ceann, dh'iarr Ladhar an ceann, 's thug e, mac a' rìgh, dha Ladhar e. 'S char Ladhar far a' robh i.

"Nis," thuirt e, "shin a'd ceann fear agus filidh, agus gheobh thu 'chuideam 's 'fhaireachdainn."

Thug e *balong* oirr'-s', leis a' cheann. Bhuail e oirr'-eas, mharbh e i. 'S thuirt e ri La-- ris, eh, mac a' rìgh, "Nis," thuirt e, "cha chuir i air folbh tuillidh thu."

Shin agai' ceann na stòiridh.

<sup>9</sup>Here Ladhar is about to take the head obtained on his quest (*ceann fear agus filidh*) and kill the otherworldly woman with it. When I have asked Brian to explain the phrase "*Bheir mis' dhith a chuideam 's 'fhaireachdainn*" he has explained it thus: "[She'll] feel the ... the ... the strength and the weight of it" (13 May 1994, Tape 2 of 2), and on another occasion he said "You know, she would feel the weight of it when she, when she, when he fired it at her, the head" (1 April 1995, Tape 1 of 2).

<sup>10</sup>"*balong*": this is a word which B.S. occasionally uses, which appears to mean "a blow".

## STÒIRIDH LADHAIR

**Date:** May, 1978<sup>1</sup>

**Collector:** David Clement

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 1006.**

[*Note: The recording stops before the end of the story. No continuation of the story has been found.*]

**B.S.:** Tha si' ag iarraidh Stòiridh Ladhair a chluinntinn, nach eil?

**D.C.:** Tha.

**B.S.:** Uill, 'se bh'ann mac rìgh òg na Fraing. Theirig 'athair agus bha 'mac air fhàgail. Agus, bhiodh e 'dol agus 'dèanamh, bhos-- 'fuireach bhos cinn na mara, agus, bhiodh e 'dèanamh cumh' agus bròn airson 'athar.

Agus, aon dhe na lathaichean, dar a bha e 'dèanamh seo, dar a thug e sùil mun cuairt air, chunnaic e an gill' òg seo 'na sheasai'.<sup>2</sup> Agus, eh, dhlùthaich e air 's, thuirt e ris dè bha ceàrr air, a' robh e ag iarraidh dad.

"O," thuirt e, "tha mi ag iarraidh mac, eh, rìgh na Fraing fhaicinn, gus a' marbh mi e, fhad 's a bhios a chnàimhean boga, mìn."

"Och, ma tha," thuirt 'rìgh ris, "eh, chan eil e seo a' dràsdaì' ach, gheobh mi dhut e."

Agus, eh, dh'èirich Ladh-- Ladh-- eh, dh'èirich a', em, 'rìgh an àird, agus, eh, char e gus a' chaisteal aig, 's chuir e aodach eil' air fhèin.

'S thàinig e sin mach, agus, "Nis," thuirt e, "tha thu ag iarraidh mis' fhaicinn."

Sheall Ladhair air.

"Nach robh e cheart cho math dhut m'fheuchainn 'n uair ud, dar a chunna mi thu bhos cinn na mar', agus dhèanamh an dràsdaich? Uill, tha mis' 'dol ga do mharbhadh."

Agus, eh, "Och, ma tha," thuirt 'rìgh, "chan [fhaic] mi ach thu ris."

'S bha aid sin, char iad 'na chèil', agus, smaoinich a' rìgh òg air fhèin gur e siod 'chiad treubhant a's a' deach e riamh. 'S thug e an togail ud, dha Ladhair, 's chuir e air a dhruim e.

"Nis," thuirt e ri Ladhair, "Se mis' tha 'dol a bhristeadh do chuid-s' cnàimhean."

Ach thug Ladhair glaodh ris, "O, leig an àird mi," thuirt e, " 's bidh mi 'na mo ghill' agad, airson aon latha deug dhe mo shaoghail."

<sup>1</sup>Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 1006 is contained in a box labelled "July, 1975". However, on the inside cover of the box it is written that Side A of the tape is from July 1975 and Side B is from May 1978. As "*Stòiridh Ladhair*" is on Side B of the tape, it would appear that the recording dates from 1978, and I list it as such.

<sup>2</sup>"na sheasai": for "na sheasamh".

"Ach mus leig mi an àird thu," thuirt ... 'rìgh òg ris, "c'ainm a th'ort?"

"Tha Ladhar," thuirt e, "Ladhar bliadhn'."

Dh'èirich e sin 'n àird, 's rug aid air làmhnan air a chèil' 's, bha e sin 'na ghill' cuide ris, air a', an oighreachd aig'.

Agus, eh, dar a bha -- dh'fholbh a' sin 'rìgh òg, 's bha aid riamh 'dèanamh cumhachas<sup>3</sup> airson 'athar. Agus, aon-- aon de na lathaichean, thàinig boirionnach far a' robh aid.

Dh'fhoighnich i dè a bha e 'dèan'.

"O," thuirt e, "tha mi 'dèanamh cumha agus bròn airson m'athar."

"O," thuirt is', "ma tha," thuirt i ris, "thug mi -- bidh gèam dhe chairtean againn, airson 'n tìd' chur seachad."

Bha iad sin 'cluich air na cairtean ach, eh, rinn a' rìgh 'gnothach oirr'.

Thuirt i ris, "Tog brìgh do chluich."

Thuirt e rith', "Tha mo rogha bean agad a'm -- ort."

"Uill, ma tha," thuirt is', "tha thu duilich ri do thoileachdainn, na bheir mis' dhut bean."

Thug i staigh do dh'àit' ann a' sin e 's, och, bha cailean ann a' sin cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e riamh, de na h-uile seòrs'. Ach chunnaic e aon chail' ann, 's bha tè ann a' seo 's tè a' sin 'toir' sguids le searadair oirr'-s' na 'cur às a' rathad ac' i. 'S thug a' rìgh òg sùil oirr' 's, "Ach," thuirt e, "cha chreid mi nach toir mi leis an tè seo. Uill, tha an fheadhainn eil'," thuirt e, "rith'. Bheir mi leis 'tè seo às a' rathad."

"Uill," thuirt is' ris, "mo bheannachd agad-as, ach mo mhollachd thig gad ionnsaidh."

'S dar thug e mach às an, às an taigh mhòr i, bha bean aig' cho brèagha 's, chunnaic e riamh le 'dhà shùil. Agus, phòs iad a' sin, 's chaidh sin, bha e a-riamh 'dol gus -- cinn na mar' 's 'dèanamh seo, airson 'athar. Agus, eh, bha iad 'n sin 'cluich air na cairtean, ach choisinn e rithistich.

'S thuirt e (*sic*) an dearbh rud ris', thuirt i ris, "Tog brìgh do chluich."

Thuirt e, "Tha mo rogha each agam ort."

"Uill," thuirt i, "tha thu duili-- duilich ri do thoileachdainn, na bheir mis' each dhut gu do chridh', thoir leis [á seo]."

'S char e a-staigh gu stàbull aic' 's, och, bha eich ann cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e riamh, dhen a h-uile seòrs.

'S chunnaic e aon loth' odhar ann. 'S bha aon a' seo 'toir' teum aisd' 's aon a' sin 'toir' teum aisd'.

"Ach, uill," thuirt e, "bheir mi leis an tè seo."

Agus, eh, thug e sin leis a' loth 's, och dar thug e mach i, á stàbull i, bha i cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e riamh, a [thè] -- 'loth. Agus, bha i cho math sin.

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<sup>3</sup>"*cumhachas*": the word which Brian generally uses at this point in the story is "*cumha*," meaning mourning or lamentation.



Làrna-mhàireach, bha e an aon àit' a-rithist, 'dèanamh cumh' agus bròn airson 'athar, agus thàinig i rithistich 's.

"O," thuirt i, "cha tug mi leis na cairtean an diugh. 'Se thug mi leis na dìstean."

Bha iad sin 'cluich air na dìstean, ach a' lath' seo, choisinn is'.

Agus thuirt es' rith'-eas 'n dà -- an aon fhacal 's thuirt is' ris-eas: "Tog brìgh do chluich."

"Togaidh," thuirt i. "Mo chrosan 's mo gheasan," thuirt i, "trì buaraichean matha sìdh nach stad oidhch' a's gach taigh dhut gus a' faigh thu dhomh-as fios feagal an aon sgeul."

Och thàinig e sin air ais, 's dh'innis e seo dha Ladhar.

"O thuirt mis' riut," thuirt Ladhar, "cumail air folbh bhon a' tè bha sìod, 's cha do ghobh thu riamh mo chomhairl'. Bha fhios agam-as gun èireadh seo dhut."

Ach chuir e sin an diollaid air a' loth' aig', an loth odhar aig', 's char e a' marcachd oirr'-s', 's thug Ladhar, bha Ladhar cuide ris, thug e leis Ladhar. 'S, och, chum iad 'dol gus an tàinig iad gu caisteal eil'. Agus nis, bha ceòl aig, eh, Ladhar. Bha cruith-chiùil aig' 's bheireadh e ceòl aisd'. Agus dar thàinig iad gus a' chaisteal bha seo, thug Ladhar mach a' chruith-chiùil aig', 's thug e ceòl aisd'. 'S chuir 'n fheadhainn bha seo 'n ceann mach air na h-uinneagan, 's thilg aid fras airgead bhàn air. 'S dar chunnaic Ladhar seo chuir Ladhar 'làimh 'na phòcaid, 's thilg e fras òir air ais orr'-s'.

"O," thuirt iad ris, "dè [...] a' fear tha seo?"

Ach thug iad sin cuireadh staigh orr'-s', 's thàinig iad staigh 's bha aid ann a' shin 'n oidhch' sin 's. Ach, dh'èirich Ladhar, 's char e 'n àird staidhr'. Thuirt e riuth' gu' robh e 'g iarraidh 'rìgh fhaic' ach chan fhaiceadh e 'rìgh. Ach, rinn Ladhar 'rathad an àird 's fhuair e grèim air a' rìgh. Agus, thug e grèim 's bheir e air 'n amhaich air a' rìgh, bha a' rìgh air a' leabaidh.

"Mura h-èirich thu an àird," thuirt e ris a' rìgh, " 's mur [teir]<sup>4</sup> thu dhomh-as sgeulachd fios feagal an aon sgeul, tha mi 'dol a thachdadh thu."

"O fuirich, fuirich," thuirt a' rìgh, "mus tachd thu mi. Inns' mi dhut mas urra dhomh.<sup>5</sup> Bha sinn ann a' seo," thuirt e, " 's cha robh fhios againn dè bha sinn 'dèanamh leinn fhéin, le airgead 's le òr, agus na bh'againn a dh'eich," thuirt e. 'S oidhch' dhe na h-oidhchean," thuirt e, "thàinig, eh, saigheal ghlas 's bhog i h-iorball a's a' salachar," thuirt es', 's fhuair mis' a's [na] fiacalan bhuaipe. 'S dh'èirich sinn," thuirt e, "a ruith a' seannach bha seo, mì fhèin 's mo chuid daoin'," thuirt e. " 'S chum sinn oirn," thuirt e, " gus an tàinig sinn an -- gus an àit' a

<sup>4</sup>"teir": possibly a distorted pronunciation of *toir*, from *toirt*, "to give".

<sup>5</sup>Here the second king recounts a tale which constitutes a story-within-the-story. Sometimes the narrative is in the first-person, indicating that the king is telling the story, and sometimes Brian switches to the third person, still telling what happened to the king.

bha seo," thuirt e, " 's char sinn staigh," thuirt e. "Bha feadhainn ann a' sin," thuirt e, "staigh agus 'O, bha e 'san fhaìsneachd gun tìgeadh si', 's tha colach gun tàinig.' "<sup>6</sup>

Agus, o rinn iad dhiubh airson a' chiad *spell* dhen oidhch', ach a' sin shìn aid air toir' mach, eh, cluich geam,<sup>7</sup> cluich an ubhal. 'S bha iad 'bualadh an ubhal bha seo.

"Agus," thuirt a' rìgh "na h-uile aon a bhualadh an t-ubhal air, bha e 'tuiteam marbh. Ach a-nis," thuirt e, "mharbh iad na h-uile gin dhe mo chuid daoine," thuirt e, "ach mis'. 'S chuir am fomhair," thuirt e, "chuir e bior 'nam cheann eil', 's bha e 'gam chumail," thuirt e, "ris an tein'. Ach," thuirt e, "thuit e 'na chadal. 'S shlipig<sup>8</sup> mis' dhen a' bhior," thuirt e, " 's rinn mi mo rathad dhachaidh," thuirt e. "Ach," thuirt e ri Ladhar, "tha thu fhèin 'faicinn nis," thuirt e, "eh, mar tha mis'," thuirt e, "cha do chuir mis' cairt-làmhnan dhiom bho 'latha sin. 'S shin a'ad " thuirt e, "nis, fios feagal an aon sgeul."<sup>9</sup>

"O uill," thuirt Ladhar ris, "mòran taing s."

Thàinig e sin bhàn 's bha [...] aig' dar dh'èirich aid.

Thuirt e ri -- ris a' rìgh òg, "Faodas si' nis dhol air ais," thuirt e, "fhuair sinn fios feagal an aon sgeul."

Chaidh iad nis air ais 's dh'innis iad seo dhan a' -- an tè eil' bha seo, dhan bhoirionnach bha seo -- bha 'stòiridh sin, 's a' rud dh'èirich dhan a' rìgh bha seo.

Ach, rinn iad sin cluich air na dìstean a-rithistich. Agus, choisinn is' rithistich. 'S an uair seo, thuirt i ris nach seasadh oidhch' a's gach taigh e gus a' faigheadh e dhith-eas ceann fear agus filidh.

'S thuirt i ris, "Chan fhaod gin a dhol ann ach thu fhèin."

Och thàinig e 'n àird an oidhch' seo 's -- lath' seo, 's bha e 'toir' an fhalt às fhèin 's, dh'innis e seo dha Ladhar.

"O, uill," thuirt Ladhar ris, "thuirt mis' riut," thuirt e, "cumail bhon a' bhoirionnach bha sin, gun toireadh i, gu' dèanadh i seo ort. Agus, cha do ghobh thu mo chomhairle. 'S tha thu nis," thuirt e, "bios agad ri folbh," thuirt-- "chan fhaod mis' bhith ann."

"Chan fhaod thu bhith ann," thuirt e, "Ladhar Laochain," thuirt e, "chan fhaod thus' bhith ann."

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<sup>6</sup>"O, bha e 'san fhaìsneachd gun tìgeadh si', 's tha colach gun tàinig" ("Oh, it was foretold that you would come, and it seems that you have") : this piece of set dialogue also occurs in another of Brian's stories, *An Siachaire Gobha* (AT 325), which is not discussed in this thesis.

<sup>7</sup>Gaelicisation: "a game".

<sup>8</sup>Gaelicisation: "I slipped".

<sup>9</sup>Here the second king finishes recounting the in-tale. In other recordings of this story made by Brian, the events of the in-tale are now repeated at this point in the story, with Ladhar having to play *cluich an ubhal* ("the apple game") and escape from the same perilous situation which the king has just described in his story. However, in the present recording this repetition is not included and the story moves on to the next episode.

Ach dh'fholbh e fhèin nis agus a' loth' aig', 's bha aid 'dol airson ùin' air a' rathad, airson seachdain no dhà gus an tàinig aid gus an àit' bha seo. Agus, char e gus a' chaisteal bha seo. Eh, thug e leum 's beum aig' a' doras, 's thuirt e riuth' ceann fear agus filidh chur mach na deagh chòmhrag air a shon. Rinn a' fomhair mòr bha staigh, rinn e gàir.

"Ruith' mach, 'fhearaibh," thuirt e, "agus thoiribh staigh ceann 'n fhear beag tha sin dhomh-as, gus a' bi mi 'cluich balla-bùird 's magaidh leis."<sup>10</sup>

Thàinig -- dh'fholbh an fheadh-- dhe 'chuid daoine' mach, 's thug Fionn òg,<sup>11</sup> thug e sùil orr'-s', 's rug e air a' fear bu chaoil' cas agus bu mhoth' ceann, agus sgleog e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil' leis.

Agus, dar a chunnaic a' sin a' fomhair nach robh gin 'tighinn staigh, "Ooo," thuirt e ris fhèin, "tha feagal orm gu' beil 'm fear beag tha a-mach, gu' bheil e sgaiteach."

'S thàinig e fhèin nis mach, dh'fheuchainn buill' agus a' rìgh òg. Agus, dar a thàinig, char iad sin 'na chèil' 's, bha iad 'dol mu' cuairt air a chèil' 's. Ach smaoinich a' rìgh òg gu' feumadh e seo a dhèanamh 's, thug e 'n togail mhòr, èibhinn, aighearach dhan fhomhair, 's chuir e ri talamh e 's, gheàrr e 'n ceann dheth, leis 'chlaideamh aig'. Chuir e sin 'n ceann ann am pòc' air a' mhuin 's leum e air muin 'loth' aig', 's shìn e air tilleachainn dhachaidh.

'S dar bha e 'tighinn air ais cha robh e 'faineachdainn *bit* dhen àit'.

Thuirt e ris fhèin, "Ah, gu dè an t-àit' tha seo?"

Ach, bho dheireadh, thachair Ladhar ris. Choinnich e.

"Cà' beil mi?" thuirt e ri Ladhar.

"O," thuirt e, "tha sì' air an oighreachd agai' fhèin."

"Dhia beannaich mi," thuirt e, "cà' beil na coilltean? A' choill' 's na rudan a bh'ann?"

"Och, nìs," thuirt Ladhar, "chuir mis' 'na tein' i. Chuir mi 'choill' 'na tein'," thuirt e, "an dèidh dhut folbh, leis, leis mar bha mi," thuirt e, "cho brònach. Chuir mi na h-uil' h-àit' 'na thein'," thuirt e. " 'N d'fhuair thu e?" thuirt e.

"O, fhuair."

"Uill, thoir thus' dhomh-as e. Thoir thusa dhomh-as ceann fear agus filidh."

Fhuair, thug e sin ceann fear agus filidh dha Ladhar.

'S dar a fhuair Ladhar e, char e gus a' chaisteal aic'-eas, aig a' bhàn-rìgh a bha seo 's, "Seo a'd," thuirt e, "ceann fear agus --" [*recording ends and is not continued elsewhere.*]

<sup>10</sup>"balla-bùird 's magaidh": "an object or butt of derision and mockery". This piece of set dialogue appears in both *Stòiridh Ladhair* and *Stòiridh Loircein* under similar circumstances. Ailidh Dall uses the same phrasing as well.

<sup>11</sup>Here B.S. substitutes the name "Fionn òg" ("young Fionn") for "the young king" -- a slip which occurs elsewhere in Brian's stories.

## STÒIRIDH LADHAIR

**Date:** 14 May 1994

**Collector:** Carol Zall

[*Note: This telling is a hurried one and the recording is more difficult than usual to make out.*]

**C.Z.:** Bha sinn a' bruidhinn mu dhèidhinn "Stòiridh Ladhair" an dè, 's, saoilidh mi am bheil cuimhne agad air a-nis, no, am bheil cuimhne gu leòr agad airson a' stòiridh a dh'innseadh, no dìreach pàirt dheth?

**B.S.:** Uill, feuchaidh mi ri Ladhar.

**C.Z.:** Aye, 's ... uill, ma thogras tu.

**B.S.:** Thàinig Ladhar a-bhàn, Ladhar, 's bha e a' folbh 'na, 'na gille, 's bha e [...] gus a' rìgh òg a ruighinn e, [rug e air ugannan 's ... gheobhadh e]. 'S thàinig e gus a' àit -- an oighreachd aig a' rìgh bha seo.

'S bha a' rìgh mach, 's thuirt e ris, "Tha mi 'sealltainn airson a' rìgh òg," thuirt e, "gus am pronn mi a chnàimhean, chnàimhean, fhad 's a tha iad boga, mìn."

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** 'S dh'fholbh a' rìgh, char e air folbh treis, thàinig e sin air ais a-rithist.

Sheall Ladhar air 's: "Shin e cho cheart cho furasd' dhut," thuirt e, " inns' dhomh an uair sin, dar a bha thu seo agus thighinn air ais rithisti' a' sin."

Ach shìn e, char iad 'na chèil, 's bha iad 'sabaid ach, rinn a' rìgh, leag e Ladh-- Ladhar. 'S bha Ladhar, air a' ceann àird aig, 's thug ... Ladhar glaodh ris, "O, leig an àird mi," thuirt e ri, " 's bidh mi 'na mo gh-- 'na mo ghille agad, cho fada agus a bhios mi beò."

"Och, èirich an àird, ma tha, Ladhar Laoch'," 's rug e air an làimh aig, "thig an àird."

Agus, bha aid sin, e fhèin 's a' rìgh ['còrdaidh].

Ach a-nis ... bha boirionnach 'tighinn, gus a' rìgh, 's bha i 'sealltainn, eh, [suiridh' air] --

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm--

**B.S.:** Agus shìn i air cluich a' dìstean -- *that's like draughts like* --

**C.Z.:** Aye --

**B.S.:** Thuirt Ladhar ris, "Uill," thuirt Ladhar ris, [...] gus a' boirionnach sin, bhe-- nì i dolaidd dhut, bheir i [goirt thu]."

'S thuirt i ris, a' rìgh, "Tha mo rogh' bean agad, ort, " 's thug i sin e leis e 's, thug i staigh gu àite, 's bha na h-uile seòrsa boirionnach a' sin, òg agus, feadhainn nach robh òg,

boirionnaich. 'S bha aonan ann, 's bha aon de na caileagan a' toir' sguids a' sin oirre le searbhadair, 's 'toir' sguids a' seo oirr' le searbhadair.

"Ach, ma tha," thuirt e, cha chreid mi nach toir mi leis an tè seo, ás a' rathad."

Thug i (*sic*) leis i, thug e leis i, 's dar a thug e mach i, bha bean aig' cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e riamh, 's bha e glè, glè measail oirr' -- aig a' rìgh.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Ach an sin, thàinig am boirionnach a-rithistich 's, bha e a' cluich rith' 's chaill a' rìgh.

Thuirt i ris, "Tog brìgh do chluich."<sup>1</sup>

"O," thuirt a' rìgh, thuirt a' bhean ris, "tha mo rogha each agad."

Thug i sin staigh gus a' stabull e, 's bha na h-uile seòrs' -- dhen a h-uile seòrs' de dh'eich ann a' sin.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** 'S thug e leis aon, bha aon dhe na h-eich 'toir' grèim a' sin oirr'-s', breab a' seo oirr'-s'. Bha e -- "Bheì-- bheir mi leis an tè seo," thuirt e. Thug e sin leis an tè sin 's.

"Nis," thuirt Ladhar ris, "gheobh thu rudeigin bhuai'-s fhathastaich, [bhon bhean sin]."

'S thàinig i rithistich, 's bha e 'cluich rith', 's chaill i rithistich. Shin dar a thuirt i ris, gum feumadh e faighinn, fios feagal an aon sgeul fhaighinn dhith.

"Ma tha," thuirt e, dh'fholbh Ladhar, "feumaidh mis' dhol cuide riut," thuirt Ladhar.

Dh'fholbh Ladhar, 's bha fhios aig Ladhar càit' a' robh iad 'dol 's bha iad 'dol 's, thàinig aid gus an àit' bha seo 's, chuir tè mach a ceann, dar a bha iad 'dol seachad 's. Thilg i làn a ... dòrn le, le *choin*<sup>2</sup> airgead air.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Chuir Ladhar 'làimh 'na phòcaid, 's thilg e *coineachan* òr air ais oirr'-s'. Thàinig e sin staigh, 's bha a' rìgh, bha e air a' leabaidh. Bha e air a chur air bior 'na thòn. [*B.S. laughs, then coughs and says "Excuse me."*]

**C.Z.:** Hmm.

**B.S.:** Thàinig e 's bha a' rìgh air a' leabaidh, 's bha e -- "'Nis," thuirt Ladhar ris, "mura h-innis thus' dhomh-as," thuirt es', "fios f-- fios feagal an aon sgeul."

"Ooo," thuirt a' rìgh ris, "bha sinn ann a' seo," thuirt es', " 's cha robh fhios againn dè bha sinn 'dèanamh leinn fhèin, bha gu leòr againn dhen a h-uile nì, [dhen an t-saoghal], bha cruidhean òr air na h-eich againn, gus an tàinig a' seannach, 's dar a bha sinn 'ruith a' seannach, gus a' tàinig si[nn] gus an àit' sin, chuir e ás -- chuir aid ás dha na h-uile gin, [...] agam, ach mis'. Ach fhuair mis' air folbh." Thuirt e, "Chuir iad bior 'na mo cheann eil',"

<sup>1</sup>The narrative is somewhat confused here. Although B.S. says that the king loses the game of dice ("*chaill a' rìgh*," "the king lost") he then goes on to recount how the *woman* asks the king to name his prize, presumably because he has won.

<sup>2</sup>Gaelicisation: "coins".



thuirt e, " 's shleapaig mis' dhen a' bhior, 's fhuair mis', theich mi dhachaidh," thuirt e, " 's tha mis' air a' leabaidh bhon uair sin."

**C.Z.:** Hmm.

**B.S.:** "Leis an tàmailt," thuirt e, " 's a h-uil' dad eil', tha mis' air a' leabaidh."

"O, ma tha," thuirt Ladhar ris, "a' seananch, ma fhuair e a ruagadh riamh, gheobh e 'ruagadh a-nochd. Èirich an àird," thuirt e ris a' rìgh, " 's thig cuide rium-as agus feuch thu an t-àit sin."

Dh'èirich a' rìgh 's char e cuide ris, [cuide ri] Ladhar, cuide ris, char e staigh don t-àit' bha seo, 's, o, bha mòran ann. 'S shìn aid air dèanamh cluich an ubhail, cluich an ubhail riuth'. Bha sgian-pòcaid aig, eh, aig Ladhar, 's dar bha iad 'tilgeil an ubhal, bha, bha e 'ga' beirsinn air, air sgian, 'n sgian aig'. 'S bha e 'ga' bualadh air ais orr', 's bha iad 'tuiteam marbh. Bha e 'gam marbhadh.

"Ah, uill, dar a thàinig iad sin air ais, thuirt a' rìgh ris, "Nis," thuirt e, "faodas thu a-nis dhol air ais agus inns' dhith, shin a'ad nis," thuirt e, "fios feagal an aon sgeul."

Agus, an sin thàinig i ... i rithis' far a' robh e, dar a dh'iarr i air ceann fear agus filidh fhaighinn.<sup>3</sup>

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** Shin ceann an fhomhair. Agus, dar a dh'fholbh e -- dar a [dh]'fholbh is' bha e 'tarraing an fhalt às fhèin, 's bha e -- dh'innis e sin dha Ladhar e.

"O, nach tuirt mis' riut," thuirt Ladhar, "gu' dèanadh a' boirionnach bha sin seo ort?"

Agus thuirt e ri Ladhar, "Chan fhaod thus' bhith cuide rium an dràsdaich. Feumaidh mi fholbh leam fhèin.

Dh'fholbh a' sin 'rìgh 's, char e gus a' chaisteal bha seo 's, thuirt e riuth' gu' robh e ag iarraidh ceann fear agus filidh.

Thuirt a' fear, 'fear bha staigh, "Ruithibh mach," thuirt e "gus an fhear tha sin agus, thoiribh dhomh-as an ceann aig' gus an dèan mi, an cluich mi balla-bùird leis."

'S dar a thàinig iad mach, rug e air feadhainn diubh 's -- rug e air a' fear bu, bu mhoth' ceann 's bu chaoil' cas, 's sgileoc e an t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil'.

'S thàinig e a-staigh 's, "O," thuirt am fomhair ris fhèin, "tha e colach gu' beil a', a' fear beag tha mach, nach [bheil]<sup>4</sup> e sgaiteach."

Thàinig e fhèin mach. 'S bha e fhèin 's a' rìgh 'sabaid, ach thog a' rìgh togail 's leag e e 's thog e an ceann deth, gheàrr e an ceann deth leis a' chladheamh aig'. 'S thug e leis e, 's dar bha e

<sup>3</sup>Here we have an example of compression by the storyteller. With the words "*Agus, an sin thàinig i ... i rithis' far a' robh e, dar a dh'iarr i air ceann fear agus filidh fhaighinn*" ("And, then she ... she came again [to] where he was, when she asked him to obtain the head of '*fear agus filidh*'") Brian summarises the action of the story at this point rather than telling it in full.

<sup>4</sup>Probably a slip of the tongue for "*nach eil*".

'tighinn air ais dhachaidh, air, air muin a', an eich aig', an eich fhuair e, choinnich e Ladhar air a' rathad.

"Dè a' t-àit' tha seo?" thuirt e ri Ladhar.

"O seo agai' an oighreachd agai' fhèin, " thuirt Ladhar.

"O, chan e," thuirt e.

" 'Se a tha 'n dà-- o mis' chuir 'na thein' e," thuirt e, "mis', chuir mis' 'na theine e. Gu-- dar a dh'fholbh thu-- dar a dh'fholbh si'," thuirt e, "cha b'urr' dhomh fuireach," thuirt e, " 's chuir mis' na h-uile dad 'na thein'."

"Och, uill, uill," thuirt Ladhar -- thuirt a' rìgh, "Ladhair Laochain."

"An d'fhuair thu e?"

"Fhuair," thuirt e.

"Thoir thus' dhomh-as e, bheir mis' dhith a chuideam 's 'fhaireachdainn."

'S eh, fhuair e -- thug a', a' rìgh dha Ladhar an ceann, 's chunnaic e ... is' mach.

"Seo agai' e," thuirt e, "tha -- sheo a'd 'n ceann fear agus filidh dhut, bheil thu 'ga iarraidh?"

"Tha," thuirt i.

"Uill seo a'd e, gheobh thu 'chuideam agus 'fhaireachdainn."

'S thug e buill' air, 's thuit is' 'na cnoidheag,<sup>5</sup> marbh. *She fell dead in [his ...] a maggot.*

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<sup>5</sup>Under his entry for "*cnoidheag*," Dwelly refers us to *cruimheag*, "a maggot"; this definition is borne out by Brian's own glossing of the phrase in English. The idea is that when Ladhar strikes the woman with the head of the giant, she disintegrates and dies. J.G. MacKay (1940: 509) discusses how the bespelling woman usually disintegrates like "a fagot of firewood," "*cual chonnaidh*".

## STÒIRIDH LADHAIR

**Date:** 1 April 1995

**Collector:** Carol Zall

**B.S.:** Stòiridh Ladhair. Uill 'rìgh òg, bha e mach a' latha seo, bha e 'na shuidh' mach. 'S thàinig balach òg seachad 's, dhlùthaich e air, [foighnich (*sic*) e ris, dhlùthaich e air].

"Dè tha thu seo -- ?"

"O, tha mi 'sealltainn, 'g iarraidh 'rìgh òg, gus am pronn mi a chnàimhea-- chnàimhean, chnàimhean, fhad 's a tha iad boga, mìn."

"O," thuirt a' rìgh, "chan eil e seo dràdaich. Chan eil a' rìgh a' seo."

'S dh'fholbh an gille a-rithistich, 's an ceann greiseag, cha robh e fad' air folbh dar a thill e air ais, thàinig e air ais a-rithist 's dh'èirich a' rìgh, 'na sheasamh.

"O, ma tha thu ag iarraidh 'rìgh," thuirt e, "seo e."

"Carson a thuirt thusa sin rium an uair ud?" thuirt a', a' gille ris.

"Uill, tha mi nis ann a' seo."

'S dh'fheuch aid air a' chèil' 's, leag a' rìgh ... an gill' bha seo, 's char e bhàn 's bha e 'ga chumail a-bhàn.

'S thuirt e ris -- thuirt a' gill' ris a' rìgh, "O leig an àird mi ... mas e do thoil e, leig an àird mi, agus bidh mi 'na, 'na mo ghill' agad, cho fad' 's a bhios mi beò."

"Uill, mus leig mi an àird thu, c'ainm a th'ort?"

"Tha Ladhar."

"O Ladhair Laochain," thuirt e, "èirich an àird ma tha."

'S dh'èirich e sin 's, rug aid air làmhnan a chèil' 's: "Uill, bios mis' 'na mo ghille agad. Nis," thuirt Ladhar ris, "aon de na lathaichean seo, thig boirionnach òg seachad a' seo, agus, bios i 'g iarraidh ort cluich air cairtean. 'S tha mis' ag inns' dhut," thuirt e, ris, ris a' rìgh, "na bi gnothaich a'ad rith'."

Dh'fholbh sin Ladhar, 's bha a' rìgh [...] ghobh e, ghobh e ceum dha fhèin 's, bha e mach a' lath' seo chunnaic e boirionnach seo 'tighinn, boirionnach brèagha.

O, bhruidhneadh i nis, thuirt i ris, "Dè tha thu 'dèanamh?"

"O, chan eil mòran," thuirt e.

"Nach shuidh thu, nach dèan thu suidh," thuirt e (*sic*), "[gus a'] dèan sinn geam dhe chairtean?"

[*B.S. coughs*]. *Excuse me.*

"Och," thuirt es', "nì." Eh. 'S bha aid 'toirt geam dhe chairtean 's, choisinn a' rìgh.

'S thuirt a', a' bhea-- a' boirionnach ris, "Tog brìgh do chluich."

"Uill," thuirt a' rìgh, "tha mo rogha each agad (*sic*) ort."

"Uill, tha thu glè dhuilich [ri] do thoileachdainn, na bheir mis' dhut each," thuirt i. "Tiugainn."

'S thug i staigh dhan a' s-- phàirc e. O, bha mòran eich ann, 's bha aon ann ... loth' odhar ann, lothag ghlais, 's bha each a' sin 'toir' breab oirr', 's bha each a' seo 'toir' breab oirr'-se.

"Ach, ma tha," thuirt e, "ma tha [thu 'dol a thoir]-- cha chreid mi [...] -- gobhaidh mi 'tè seo." Och, *all right*. Thug e sin a-nis i 's, o, bha e glè phroiseil aisd'. Thug e nis í, bha e, bha e glè phro-- thoilichte leath'.

Ach, thuirt i ris, thuirt am boirionnach ris, "Bidh mi air ais a-màireach a-rithisti'," thuirt i.

"O, ma tha," thuirt a' rìgh, "bidh mis' ann a' seo dìreach far am beil mi a' dràdaich."

Thàinig e, 's dar a thàinig i, "O," thuirt i, "cha tug mi leis na cairtean an diugh. 'Se a th'agam na dìstean."

'S bha iad 'cluich air na dìstean, ach choisinn is', a' bhean, 'boirionnach.

'S thuirt i ris-eas, "Nis," thuirt i ris a' rìgh, "tha mis' a' cur mo chrosan ort," thuirt e (*sic*), "gu' tèid an ceann a ghearradh diot, mur a' faigh thu dhomh-as ceann fear agus filidh."

"An d'fhuair gin riamh e?"

"Cuid a fhuair, cuid nach d'fhuair."

"Och, *all right*, ma tha," thuirt a', thuirt a' balach, thuirt a' rìgh, feuch[aidh] sinn nis ceann fear agus filidh."

Char e sin air ais gu Ladhar, 's dh'innis--

"Nach tuirt mis' riut," thuirt Ladhar, "[s] nach do dh'innis mi dhut, gun dèanadh i sin ort e? Nach tuirt mis' riut sin, cumail bhuaip'."

"O, ma tha, Ladhair," thuirt e, "chan fhaod thus' a bhith ann. Chan fhaod thu, chan fhaod thu, thuirt i rium nach fhaodadh gin dhol, cuide rium ach mi fhèin."

Ach bha e 'dol, thug e leis a' lothag, 's char e 'marcachd oirr' 's, bha e 'dol, thàinig e gus an tai-- an àit' aig ceann fear agus filidh 's. Dh'iarr e mach e, [*challenge-ig*]<sup>1</sup> e mach e 's, char iad 'na chèil' ach, thug e mach 'chlaidheamh, 's sgud e an ceann deth. Thug e leis [na] bhroilleach e 's, dar bha e 'tighinn air ais, thill e an sin dar a bha e 'tighinn dhachaidh, air ais. Bha e 'tighinn air ais. Cha robh e a' faithneachdainn an t-ait' idir. Ach, choinnich Ladhar e.

Choinnich e e s', thuirt e ri Ladhar, "'Dhia glèidh m'anam," thuirt e ri Ladhar, "cà' bheil mi?"

"Tha thu-- cà' bheil thu," thuirt e, "air an oighreachd agad fhèin."

"Chan eil mis' 'faithneachdainn [] *bit* dheth," thuirt e, "chan e seo an t-ait' agam-as."

"O 'se."

"Ma tha, tha, tha ...."

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<sup>1</sup>Gaelicisation: "he challenged".

"O, chuir mis' 'na thein' e. Chuir mis' 'na thein' e. Bha mi cho, cho, cho muladach, dar a dh'fholbh thu. Dar nach robh gin agam ach mi fhèin. Bha mi cho muladach 's, dar a dh'fholbh thus'. D'fhuair thu e?"

"Fhuair."

"O thoir thu dhomh-as e, thoir dhomh-as an ceann."

Thug e dha [] an ceann.

"Bheir mis' dhith e 's, gheobh i 'chuideam 's 'fhaireachdainn."

Thàinig, eh ... Ladhar air ais, air adhart leis a' cheann, 's bha ... 'm boirionnach bha seo mach, 's thug e -- thilg e -- "Sheo," thuirt e, "shin a'ad e, bheil thu ag iarraidh ceann, shin a'ad e, 's, gheobh thu 'chuideam agus 'fhaireachdainn."

Thuit is' marbh, dar a bhuail e leis a' cheann i.

"Nis," thuirt, eh, Ladhar ris, "cha chuir is' dragh tuillidh ort. Cha chuir an tè sin dragh tuillidh dhut."

'S shin a'd nis Stòiridh Ladhair.



## STÒIRIDH LOIRCEIN

**Date:** 1974

**Collector:** Donald Archie MacDonald

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1974/27/A-B1**

*[Recording begins in mid-sentence.]*

... a's na seann tìdean, 'se rìgh òg na Frainc a bh'ann. Agus, eh, bha aid, eh, air an Fhèinneachd ac' air a', eh, mach aig a' coin 's, a' sealg. Agus 'se na coin bhiodh ac' an uair sin, miol-choin 's, rud dhen t-seòrs' sin. 'S bha iad mach a' latha seo, e fhèin 's a' luchd-oibrich aig'-eas, 's dh'èirich braoisgean beag biorach ruadh às a' fhraoch, 's thug e gair' às, thug e an air' riuth'.

"Cò chuireadh fiacail às a' rìgh shaoghalt' an diugh?"

'S, eh, fhuair e buill' a's a' bheul, a' rìgh, 's char fiacail chur às.

Och, thug aid sin 'rìgh dhachaidh 's, bha [a' fuil mu bheul]. Ach, dh'fhàs e sin na b'fheàrr, dh'fhàs a bheul na b'fheàrr 's, char aid mach a-rithistich, an ath lath' [...]. 'S dh'èirich an aon rud, ach 'dèanamh sgeulachd ghoirid dheth, char ceithir fiacail a chur às, leis am fear a bha ag èirigh às a' fhraoch. Agus a' sin, leis an tàmailt a bh'ann, ghobh a' rìgh, ghobh e 'leabaidh. Ghobh e tàmailt chianail às.

Agus. Bha a-nis, an t-oighr', 's an tànaisean, a theireadh iad ris, 'se mac, mic a' rìgh a bha *supposed* a bhith annta. Agus, dh'èirich iad 'latha seo, 's thuirt an darna fear ris an fhear eil' dhiubh, feumadh aid dh'fholbh 'sealltainn airson fiacalan an athar. 'S, eh, chuir iad bàt' an òrdugh, saoitheach an òrdugh, siùil rith' 's. Bha aid 'dèanamh air an àit' bha seo 's. Ach, bha Loircean, bha es' ag iarraidh a' folbh --

"Och, dè tha thus' 'dol dhèanamh cuide riunn, Loircean?"

Ach thuirt a', a', an darna fear ris an fhear eil' dhiubh, "Och nach toir thu leis Loircean? Nì e an gnothach airson a bhith 'cur mach, eh, luath dhuinn."

Thug iad sin leis, Loircean 's aid fhèin, 's ghobh aid, bha iad 'dol air adhairt a's a' chuan.

'S thuirt an t-oighr' ris an tànaisean, "Ruith an air-- an àird," thuirt e, "a's a' chrannag, seall am faic thu dè chì thu."

Char e an àird criomag bheag a's a' chrann aig a' chrannag. O, cha deach e an àird fad' 'sa' bith dar a thàinig e bhàn.

"Ach," thuirt e ris, "bì thu fhèin 'dol an àird. Cha robh [...] an àird a' sin."

Chaidh -- "Och, hud! hud!" thuirt am fear eil' dhiubh, "cha mhòr is fhiach thu. Feumaidh," thuirt e, "mì fhèin a dhol ann."

Dh'fheuch es' nis ach, cha deach es' cho fad', dar a thàinig e bhàn. Ach thàinig sin Loircean.

Thuir Loircean riuth', "An tèid mis' ann?"

"O, gu dè tha thus' 'dol a dhèanamh ann? Dar 's deachadh sinn ann, 'n deach thus' an àird an crann?"

Ach, thuir aid ris, "Feuch e, ma tha. Bi, bi 'dol."

Ach, char Loircean, 's a [...] fheileadh 's, ghobh e ris a' chrann 's, char, eh, Loircean nis gus a' deach e an àird gus a' mullach aig' [...].

"O," thuir, eh, Loircean, "o, tha mi 'faicinn talamh 's." Thug e sin dhoibh cùrs 's, *steer* e -- eh, stiùir e air an eilean bha seo. 'S dar ruig iad an t-eilean, bha e 'dol 'na thein'.

'S, eh, "Och," thuir iad ri Loircean, "dè an t-àit' 'san tug thu an seo sinn? 'S cò 's urrainn dhol mach measg an tein' tha sin?"

"Och," thuir Loircean, " 's cinnteach gun tèid si' a-mach, 's gu cuiri' si' às an tein'."

Ach, uh, och, bha am fraoch 's a h-uile dad a bh'ann 'dol 'na thein'. Char an t-oighr' a-mach co-dhiubh 's, dh'fheuch e ris ach, loisg e 'làmhnan 's, 'aodach 's, thàinig e staigh air ais. Dh'iarr e sin air an fhear eil' a dhol 's, och, cha b'urra dha stad a dhèanamh air bu mhoth'.

"Ach, feuchaidh mis' ris," thuir Loircean, leum Loircean mach, 's 'fhèileadh 'leum. Chuir Loircean, chuir e às na bh'ann a thein'.

Agus, eh, dh'fholbh a' sin Loircean, 's dh'fhuirich an dithisd eil' aig a' bhàt'. Ach thuir iad aig, eh, Loircean bhith 'dol.

Dh'fholbh Loircean 's.

'S a-nis bha, trì ... triùir bhràithrean, air an eilean, agus 'se fomhairean a bh'annta. Bha caisteal copair, 's caisteal airgid, 's an caisteal mu dheireadh 'se caisteal òir a bh'ann. 'S bha, eh, fomhaire, a's a h-uile aon diubh. Agus, eh, chum Loircean a' dol gus do ruig e an caisteal, a' chiad fear gus an tàinig e an caisteal, eh, copair. Thug e glaodh aig a' doras, fiacail an athar chur mach, na deagh chòmhrag air an son.

Thuir a' fear bha staigh, 'na gàir', thuir e, "Ruithi' mach, 'fhearaibh, 's thoiribh staigh ceann an fhear bheag tha sin ann dhomh-as, gu' am bi mi 'dèanamh balla-bhùird 's magaidh dheth."

Dh'èirich iad sin mach, 's thug Loircean sùil ort'-s', rug e air a' fear, 'fear bu mhoth' ceann dhiubh, 's bu chaoile cas. 'S rug e air 'chasan, 's sgileog e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn aig an doras.

"Ahhh," thuir a' fomhair mòr, "tha e colach," thuir e, "nach eil am fear beag tha mach, nach eil e leis fhèin. Gu' feum mi fhèin dhol mach."

Thàinig e sin mach 's, char e fhèin 's Loircean, an greimean a chèil'. Smuainich Loircean gur e siod 'chiad treunt' a's a' deach e a-riamh 's, thug e an togail mhòr, èibhinn, aighearach ud dhan fhomhair, 's chuir e air a dhruim e 's, sgud e an ceann deth. Char e sin staigh don taigh, dha chaisteal.

"O," thuirt a' bhean ris, dar a thàinig e: " 'S math gu' tàinig thu," thuirt i, "gu' d'fhuair mis' air folbh á seo. Agus nis," thuirt i, "bhon a thàinig thu, tha ... dithis tè eil' agad, agus am fear bho dheireadh," thuirt i, " 'se a' fear as treas' dhiubh."

Dh'innis i sin dha, na h-uile dad a bhiodh aig' ri dhèanamh.

"Nis," thuirt i, "tha ... rudan a bhuineas dhomh-as seo" -- na *jewels* aic', agus, eh, bha coin aic', lomhainn chon<sup>1</sup> aic'.

'S thuirt i, "Bios aig na h-uile dad tha seo [thìghinn, a thìghinn] air folbh."

Agus, eh, "Uill," thuirt Loircean rith', "fuirich thus', ann a' seo, gus an tig mis' air ais."

'S char e sin, Loircean, chum e roimhe gus an tàinig e gus a' chaisteal airgid. 'S, dar a ruig e a' caisteal airgid, rinn e an dearbh rud ann a' sin, thug e glaodh aig a' doras, fiacail an athar chur mach. Agus, chuir a' fear a-mach -- an fheadhainn bha staigh a-mach airson an ceann chur dhe Loircean, 's thoir staigh dha. Ach rinn Loircean an dearbh rud air an fheadhainn sin, rug e air a' fear bu mhoth' ceann, agus bu chaoile cas dhiubh. 'S sgealb e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil'.

'S thàinig a' sin, 'm fomhair mòr, thuirt e ris, "Och," thuirt am fomhair mòr, "feumaidh mi fhèin dhol mach. [B.S. coughs] Chan eil -- 'm fear beag tha mach aig an doras," thuirt e, "tha e sgaiteach."

O, dar a thàinig a' fear seo mach -- 'se fear, fear mòr, mòr a bh'ann. 'S bha e fhèi' 's Loircean 'dol mu' cuairt air a chèil' ann a' sin. 'S bha Loircean 'sealltainn, 's feuch a' faigheadh e, eh ... mu' cuairt air. Ach thug e dha, char aid sin 'na chèil' 's. Ach co-dhiubh, chuir Loircean ri talamh e 's, gheàrr e an ceann deth.

Char e sin staigh, gus a' bhean 's [...], thuirt i ris, na h-uile dad bha 'n tè eil' 'g inns' dha.

"Ach a-nis," thuirt i ri Loircean, "dar a thèid thus gus a' chaisteal mu dheireadh, cha leig thu leas dhol a ... shabaid ris an fhear sin, oir cha dèan thu 'n gnothaich air." Agus, eh, thuirt i, "Cha leig thu leas," thuirt i, "dhol a ... dhol a dhèanamh, eh, mar a rinn thu air, air an fhear bha seo," thuirt i.

Ach, uh.

"Dar a thig mis' air ais," thuirt Loircean, "bi thus' deiseil," thuirt e, "agus, eh, bheir mis' air ais," thuirt e, "gu oighreachd m'athar thu."

Agus, eh.

"O," thuirt i, "mus fholbh thu, mus tèid thu gus a', gus a' chaisteal, uh, òir. 'Se a' fear sin," thuirt i, " 'se fear cianail a th'ann, 's cha dèan thu *stem* dheth. Ach," thuirt i ris, "eh, bhris e a' bogha-saighead aig'." Agus, eh, thuirt i ris, "Dar a thèid thus' ann, bidh thus' ... bios thu 'càradh bhoghachan-saighead. Agus, dar a charas thu 'bogha-saighead aig', their es' riut ... eh, their thus' ris, 'Dè air a' feuch mi e?' 'O, feuch orm fhèin e, feuch orm fhèin e,' their es'."

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<sup>1</sup>"lomhainn": "a leash"; "lomhainn chon": "a leash of hounds".

Agus thuirt i ris, "Tha ball-dòbhran air a' bhathais aig'. 'S ma gheobh thus'," thuirt i, "a' saighead, gun urr' dhut chur a's a' bhall-dòbhran, marbhas thu e. Ach shin an aon rathad, nì thu -- cur às dha."

"O," thuirt Loircean rith', "mòran taing," thuirt e s'. "Feuch' mis' ris a' rud as fheàrr is urra dhomh air."

Ach ruig sin Loircean an caisteal òir, 's thug e leum aig a' doras, fiacail an athar chur mach, na deagh chòmhrag aig' airson. 'S thuirt am foinhair riuth', dhol mach agus ceann an fhear bheag a bh'aig a' doras thoir staigh gus am biodh e 'dèanamh, 'dèanamh cluich an ubhail leis. 'S rinn Loircean mar a rinn e aig an fheadhainn eil' diubh, rug e air a' fear bu chaoile cas, bu mhoth' ceann 's, sgleog e an t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn bh'aig a' doras. 'S dar rinn e sin, theich e sin 'ga fhalach. 'S thàinig a' sin a' foinhair mòr mach, 's bha e [...] a' fear a bha seo 's, chual' e sin Loircean. O bha Loircean 'dol air chrith.

"O," thuirt e, "na beanibh dhomh, na beanibh dhomh, na beanibh dhomh. Chual' mi fuaim aig a' chaisteal, 's cha robh fhios a'm gu dè 'm fuaim bh'ann."

" 'S dè tha thus' 'dèanamh seo?"

"O," thuirt e, "cha robh mis' ach 'càradh bhoghachan-saighead." Thuirt e, "Tha mis' a' càradh bhoghachan-saighead."

"O, ma tha," thuirt e, " 's tus' an t-aon fear tha mi ag iarraidh. Bhris mis', eh, 'm bogh' agam," thuirt e s'. "Thig a-staigh," thuirt e, "gus an càirich thu e."

Chaidh sin Loircean staigh 's, chàirich e 'm bogh' aig, agus, eh, dar bha e ullaimh, thog Loircean, chuir e a' saighead ann, thuirt e, "Chan eil fhios a'm, cò air a' feu-- air a' feuch mi e?"

"Och," thuirt am foinhair ris, "feuch orm fhèin e. Feuch orm-as e."

"Och, chan fheuch, chan fheuch mi ort e. Nach--"

"Och, cha bhean e, cha dèan e dad orm-as. Cha, cha dhrùidh orm-as."

Ach, thug sin Loircean, ghobh e *aim* dheth 's, thàinig osann<sup>2</sup> bheag dhen a' ghaoth 's, chuir i 'n dosan aig an foinhair air ais, 's chunnaic e a' ball-dòbhran, leig osann [leis]. 'S dar a leig e às e, chuir e dìreach, uh, troimhn a' bhall-dòbhran e 's, mharbh e a' foinhair. Thuit e ann a' sin 's, dar a fhuair e gu [robh e] marbh, thug e a' sin an ceann dheth, leis a' chlaideamh aig'. 'S thàinig e sin staigh don a' chaisteal 's, "Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhean, "tha -- tha mo ghnothaich air deireadh, deis' a' seo. Bheil fiacail --?"

"O," thuirt e (*sic*), "tha," thuirt a' bhean. "Tha fiacalan t'athar ann a' seo."

Fhuair e na ceithir fiacalan aig 'athair, agus, eh, stuth chuireadh na fiacalan air ais, a's a', na càireinean aig'. 'S thug e leis na coin 's, na fàinneachan 's, h-uile dad a bhuineadh dhith 's, char aid ann am pòcaid. Agus, eh, bha iad nis 'dèanamh air ais, dar bha iad sin, dar a thig' aid

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<sup>2</sup>The word "*osag*" ("breeze, gust") would be expected here; perhaps there has been some confusion between "*osann*" ("sigh") and "*osag*".



air ais a-nis, bha, eh ... toll ac' ri thighinn troimhe, agus theireadh iad ris "An Cliabhan Tollt'," agus 'se lioft bha 'dol an àird ann. 'S bha nis an dithisd bh'air a' mhullach, eh, an t-oighr' 's an tànaisean, bha aid' 'fuireach, dar a bhiodh Oisean-- eh, Oisean,<sup>3</sup> aig a', aig -- dar a thig' e air ais, bha e 'toir tarraing air an toll, 's bha fhios ac' gu' robh e ann a' sin. 'S chuir e ann a' shin -- Oisein, chuir e a' chiad bhean, agus, eh, air a', staigh 'sa lioft, 's thug e tarraing air a' toll. O, thug, eh, thug iad 'n àird i. 'S dar a thug iad 'n àird i, o, thuirt-- chan fhac' iad boirionnach riann bha cho brèagha rith'. ['Sin a shìn] an dithisd diubh air sabaid air a son, cò aig' a bhiodh i. Bha iad nis, an t-oighr' 's an tànaisean, bha aid sìos 's suas a's a' fhraoch ann a' sìod 's eh, 'cur nan clachan bho 'n casan, cò aig a bhiodh a' biorionnach, bha seo. [B.S. laughs.] Agus: "O fuirichibh, fuirichibh," thuirt i. "Na bithibh 'sabaid air mo sho', tha tè nas brèagha' na mis' 'tighinn fhathastaich."

Agus. Uill, a-nis -- sguir iad an sin 's. Thug sin, Loircean *pull* air an toll a-rithistich 's, chuir e a-nis an tè a bha 'sa chaisteal airgid an àird. Agus bha nis tè an aon ac'. Cha robh sabaid ann an uair sin. Ach, thàinig sin 'n tè bho dheireadh, an tè bha 'sa chaisteal òir. Thug Loircean *pull* air an toll a-rithistich 's, agus, eh, chuir e is' a's a' chliabh, 's char iad, thug iad an àird i. Ach dar a thàinig an tè seo, chuir i 'n dithisd eil' a's an *shade* uile gu lèir, bha i cho brèagha. 'Sann a shìn 't-sabaid a-rithistich. [B.S. laughs]. Agus a' sin, bha a' t-sabaid sìod leis an dà bhràthair bha seo, cò aig a bhiodh a' bhean bha seo.

"O, fuirichibh, fuirichibh," thuirt i, "tha tè nas brèagha' na mis' 'tighinn fhathast."

Nis, an ath neach bha 'tighinn, 'se Loircean fhèin bh'ann, e fhèin 's na coin. 'S na, agus na, rudan, uh, aig a', aig a' -- boirionnaich, pòcaichean ac'. Ach thuirt Loircean, "Saoil' mi," thuirt e, "beil fhios ac' gu' bheil neach eil' 'tighinn?" -- 's chuir Loircean clach mhòr a's a' chliabh, 's, thug iad an àird bìdeag e 's, leig aid air ais i.

"Heh," thuirt Loircean, "bha mi 'dèanamh dheth," thuirt e, "gur e, gur e seo a rachadh dhèanamh. Nam b'e mis' bh'ann," thuirt e, "bha mi nis marbh, rachadh mo leig-- leigeil tuiteam air ais."

Ach chaidh a' sin Loircean 's bha e air an eilean 's, cha robh gin ann ach e fhèi 's na coin 's, na pòcaichean aig a', aig na boirionnaich, 's chan fhaigheadh e às an eilean.

Chaidh sin 'n t-oighr' 's an tànaisean, ruig aid ... àit' an athar, an oighreachd aig an athair. Char iad staigh 's, bha na boirionnaich ac', 's o, ... bha 'righ cho pròiseil asda. Fhuair iad nis, fhuair aid fiacalan searrach -- searraich, ceithir fiacalan a' searraich, bha iad 'ga' 'cur seo,<sup>4</sup> 'na beul 'athar, gus do, [laughing] gus do theab aid a mharbhadh uileag.

Agus, uill ... ach a-nis, chaidh nis ... cha robh an athair dad na b'fheàrr, 's cha b'urr' dha dad idir a dhèanamh, eh, chiùrr iad a' beul aig', a chàirean, le cur fiacail-- fiacalan a' searraich ann.

<sup>3</sup>Here B.S. accidentally names the hero as *Oisean* instead of *Loircean*.

<sup>4</sup>Here one can hear Brian make a slapping sound with his hand, as if he is demonstrating how the brothers try to force the horse's teeth into their father's mouth.



'S bha sin, an t-oighr' 's an tànaisean, 's bha na boirionnaich ac', bean an aon ac' dhiubh. Agus, eh, bha Loircean riamh air an eilean.

Ach lath-- aon latha, bha Loircean ri taobh 'chladaich, 's chunnaic e bàtan caol 'tighinn. Chuir Loircean 'n àird 'làimh 's thug e glaoth ris. Stad a' fear a's a' bhàt' 's, thàinig e staigh gu tìr. Dh'fhoighnich e ri Loircean cà' robh e.

"O," thuirt e, Loircean, "tha mi 'g iarraidh," thuirt e, "dhol air ais gu oighreachd m'athar ... rìgh na Fraing," thuirt e, "na' Frangach."

Agus.

"O, thig staigh," thuirt an duin' ris.

"Ta," thuirt Loircean ris, "tha, uh, trì lomhainn-chon agam-as, agus, eh, rudan eil'," thuirt e, "pòcaich'."

"O," thuirt e, "thoir na coin staigh cuideachd."

Ach thog Loircean 'chuid pòcaichean, eh pòcaichean na' boirionnaich leis na fàinneachan 's na rudan a bh'ac'. Agus, eh, chuir e, a's a' bhàt' aid, e fhèi' 's na coin. 'S thàinig nis Loircean air ais gu oighreachd 'athar, ach, cha deach e rathad a' chaisteil idir. Char e gu ... eh, 'n gobhainn bh'air, bh'air a', an oighreachd, agus a' bhean aig'. 'S, dh'fholbh, 's dh'fhalaich e na coin. Chuir e air falach aid. 'S chuir e air falach na h-uile dad bh'aig' 's, agus, cha robh fhios aig gin, gu' robh Loircean ann idir.

Agus, eh, ... latha dhe na lathaichean seo, bha a' sin 'rìgh, luchd a' rìoghachd, bha iad mach, a's an t-sealg 's, chuir iad geall le mial-choin, cò 'n cù bu luaithe. Agus, eh, thàinig a' ... 'n gobhainn 's bha e, staigh 's bha e 'g inns' seo dha Loircean.

"O," thuirt e, "tha rèis 'son mial-cho' gu bhith màireach 's tha airgid mòr ann. Na bhuidhneas e aon de na lomhainn-chon th'agad a' sin, dh'fhaodadh gu', gun dèanadh sinn airgid."

"Och uill," thuirt Loircean ris. "Bheir mis' dhut, eh, na coin, aon de na coin," thuirt e, "ach cuimhnich nach caill thu e. "

"O cha chaill, cha chaill, cha chaill," thuirt a', thuirt an gobhainn ris. "Cha chaill mis' es'."

*"All right."*

Thug e sin dha a' cù 's, char a' rèis chon chur seachad 's, eh, choisinn an cù aig, eh, Loircean -- aig, uill, aig a' ghobhainn a bha e. Agus, dar a thug a' boirionnach a bha seo sùil, 's thug i glaoth air a' chù, char an cù far a' robh i 's, shìn e air leum 's dèanamh, uh, othail rith' 's, dh'fholbh i leis a' chù. Thug i dhachaidh [e].

O thàinig an gobhainn air ais, 's bha e 'sgal 's 'còin', "O," thuirt e, "thug ... eh, 'm boirionnach bha sìod," thuirt e, "thug i leis an cù, 's cha ti-- cha toireadh i air ais dhomh. 'S [...] gu' tuirt thu rium gu', gun toir thu an ceann dhiom-as," thuirt e, "airson gu' do chaill mi a' cù."

"Och ... chan eagal," thuirt Loircean, "leig leis," thuirt e.

Ach, chum e sin 'dol rèis nan con co-dhiubh airson, gus do dh'fholbh ... na h-uile cù bh'ann, bha sia chon ann. Ach thug e dha an dà chù bho dheireadh, aig a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal òir.

Dar a bha a' rèis a' latha sin ann, char i gus a' gobhainn, 's thuirt i ris, "Mur dèan thu dhomh-as," thuirt i, "broids,<sup>5</sup> 's fàinn', agus, eh," -- cha chreid mi nach e -- "cìr ..." thuirt i, "bios do cheann air stob."

O, thàinig e, thàinig e sin dhachaidh, 's bha e 'còineadh 's, 'tarraing an fheusag 's a' falt às fhèi'.

"O, dè rinn a' bhitch bha sìod orm-as! Thug i leis na coin 's, tha mis' gu bhith mo cheann air stob mur dèan mi, eh, broids 's sgàthan 's, eh, broids 's cìr, agus, eh, rudan dhith."

"O uill," thuirt, eh, Loircean ris. "Chan eil fhios agam-as," thuirt e, "b'àbhaist dhomh-as," thuirt e, "bhith 'nam òr-cheard. Agus, eh, dh'fhaodadh," thuirt e, "gu' dèan mis' rudeigin dhut nochd."

"O, math thu, math thu fhèin, math thu fhèin," thuirt an gobhainn, "gus am, gus am faigh m'is' clìoras dhith."

Agus, sin dar a char iad laighe, dh'èirich Loircean, 's char e mach dhan a' cheàrdaich. 'S thug e, thog e a' t-òrd, 's bha e 'dèanamh *dong, dong, dong* air an inneal. Bha an gobhainn 'g èisneachd, 's thug-- chrath e a' bhean aig a' shin, bha i 'na laighe, thug e p-- "Uisd, uisd!" thuirt e rith', "tha an gobhainn ag obair! An gobhainn ag obair!"

Ach, .... [*Hear one can hear a woman -- Ina Stewart?-- say "Ach, uill". The recording is then paused, and resumes with:*]

"Uisd," thuirt e, "tha a' gobhainn 'g obair, 'n gobhainn 'g obair."

"Och," thuirt i, "nach eil mi ag [...]."

"O-o-ch!," thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Chan eil fhios agad-as. Tha fhios agam-as," thuirt e, "dè tha e 'dèanamh."

Dar a char e mach dhan a' cheàrdaich 'sa madainn-- a's a' mhadainn, bha 'rud bha 'boirionnach 'g iarraidh air an inneal. Agus, o, char e, 'n sin, char an gobh' an àird lea' 's thug e dhith--

"O-o-o," thuirt e (*sic*), "math thu fhèin." Agus, "mòran taing" dha, thuirt (*sic*) i, "Rinn thu -- rinn thu dìreach glè mhath."

Ach, sin dh'iarr sin 'n tè eil', 'n dearbh rud a dhèanamh dhith. Dh'iarr i, eh, broids, 's fàinn' 's, cìr 's, rudan dhen t-seòrs' sin dhèanamh dhith-eas air an inneal cuideachd.

Agus, och, thàinig e sin air ais sin 'latha sin, 's bha e cho dona 's a bha e roimhe -- 'glaothaich 's, 'còineadh 's, bha e 'n dùil gu', biodh e marbh mur fhaigheadh e seo dhèanamh.

"Ach," thuirt Loircean ris, "na gobh thus' cùram sam bith às," thuirt e. "Dh'fhaodadh," thuirt e, "gu' dèan mis' dhut iad, uaireigin nochd."

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<sup>5</sup>Gaelicisation: "brooch".

Ach, chaidh e mach an oidhch' sin dar a char iad laighe 's thug Loircean *dong* no dhà air an innean leis an òrd, 's chuir e na rudan a bh'aig a' bhean -- rudan bha 'sa phòc' aig' -- chuir e air an inneal aid. 'S dar a thàinig a', 'n gobhainn mach, 's dar a dh'èirich e 'sa madhainn, bha na rudan ann a' sin dha. O chaidh e sin 'n àird gus a' *lady* leis, agus, thug e dhith e.

"O," thuirt i, "mòran taing a'ad. Ach fuirich," thuirt i ris. "Cò, cò rinn na rudan a' seo?"

"O rinn mi fhèin," thuirt an gobhainn.

Rug i air, 's chrath i e. "Uill, seall thu," thuirt i, "mura h-innis thus' dhomh-as, cà 'n d'fhuair thu na coin, agus cà 'n d'fhuair thu, eh, eh, am fàinn', 's a' chìr, 's na rudan a rinn thu dhomh-as," thuirt i, "bidh-- bios do cheann air stob." Ach.

"O, fuirich, fuirich," thuirt e, "mus toir si' dhiom-as an ceann, agus dh'fhaodadh gun innis mi dhuibh."

Agus, eh, dh'innis e sin dhith, gur e fear a thàinig gus an taigh 's, gu' robh e 'fuireach cuide riuth'.

Agus, "O, bha mi 'dèanamh dheth sin," thuirt i, "gur e sin a' fear a bh'ann." Agus, "*All right*," thuirt i, "bì thus' 'dol."

Chaidh e sin dhachaidh 's dh'innis e seo dha Loircean.

"O, bha agam ri inns' dhith. Bha agam ri inns', 's tha fhios aic' nis," thuirt e, "gur e thus' a rinn na rudan ud, agus, gur e leat-s' bha na coin, 's na h-uile dad a bh'ann. Agus, chan eil fhios a'm-as gu dè tha 'dol a dh'èirigh dhomh-as," [thuirt e].

"Och," thuirt Loircean ri', "chan èirich [nithean] dhut. No dhomh-as."

Agus, fhuair a' sin, 'n tè bha 'sa chaisteal òir, dh'iarr i 'bhàn-righ fhaicinn. O, thàinig a' bhàn-righ.

"O," thuirt i ris (*sic*), "tha" -- na lathaichean sin, 'se staoidhseachan<sup>6</sup> bha iad 'caith', na boirionnaich -- "seo agai' staoidhs," thuirt i, "rinn mi dhuibh."

"O, math thu fhèin," thuirt a' bhàn-righ, "ach, carson [...] a thug thu dhomh-as e?"

"[Cha tug]," thuirt i, "ach, feuch' mi ort e."

Chuir i sin seo timchioll air, air a' bodhaig. 'S dar rinn i a' staoidh, chuir i làn -- bha prìneachan, 's rudan ud aic' ann. 'S dar a tharraing i a' staoidh, char seo roimp', throimhn a' bhàn-righ.

"O-o-o," bha i 'glaodhaich rith', "carson -- dè tha thu 'dèanamh orm, dè tha thu 'dèanamh?"

"Uill, gun innis thu dhomh-as an fhìrinn, cò leis," thuirt i, "tha 'n t-oighr'? Cò athair dhan t-oighr'?"

"O-o-o, an còcaire, an còcaire, an còcaire," thuirt i. [*B.S. laughs.*]

"Heh!" thuirt i.

Thug i sin an ath tharr[aing] áisd', " 'S cò, cò athair dhan tànaisean?"

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<sup>6</sup>"*staoidhseachan*": "stays," i.e., corsets.

" 'Rìgh, 'rìgh."

Thug i sin tarraing eile.

"O-o-o, tha mi [marbh ...]," thuirt i.

"Cò leis tha, tha, tha, tha, tha an t-oighr?"

"O, leis a' bhudlar,<sup>7</sup> leis a' bhudlar tha e."

"Nis," thuirt i, "cò leis tha, tha Loircean?"

"O leis a' rìgh tha Loircean."

"O, 'sann," thuirt i. " 'Se 'rìgh athair Loircean."

Agus, [gun tug] i sin 'staoidh dhith.

Agus, "Nis," thuirt i, chuir i nis fios air Loircean. Thàinig Loircean 'n àird, gus a' chaisteal.

"Shin a'ad," thuirt i ris, "an duin'," thuirt i, "a' fear a mharbh na fomhairean, agus a thug sinn gu *freedom*, agus, eh, a fhuair fiacail ud 'athar."

Char e sin 'n àird gu 'athair, 's thug e na fiacalan a' searraich às, 's thilg e air folbh aid. 'S chuir e 'fhiacalan fhèi' staigh ann 's, eh, a' stuth a bh'aig' ann a' botal, chuir e ri 'chàireanan 's, och, bha 'athair cheart cho math 's a bha e riamh 's roimhe. 'S cha, chan eil fhios agam-as nach eil iad mar sin fhath-- o chan e, phòs, eh, Loircean agus a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal òir, 's fhuair an t-oighr' 's an t-àisnear an dithisd eil'. Sheo a-nis, shin a'd ceann na stòiridh dhut. [B.S. *finishes in laughter.*]

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<sup>7</sup>"budlar": "butler".

## STÒIRIDH LOIRCEIN

**Date:** 24 February 1993<sup>1</sup>

**Collector:** Dr. John Shaw

[*The story is preceded by some conversation.*]

**B.S.:** Uill, Loircean Luath, 'se mac rìgh a bh'ann -- rìgh na F-- na F-- na, na h-Èireann a bh'ann.

**J.S.:** 'Seadh.

**B.S.:** Rìgh na Fraing a bh'ann. 'S bha a' sin, 'n t-oighr' 's an tànaisean -- 'm bùdlar 's -- *butler* 's an còcaire.<sup>2</sup> Agus, bha 'rìgh -- 'latha seo, bha e mach 'sealg, bha e mach a's a' mhon' le 'ghun' 's le 'chù, a' sealg. 'S dh'èirich rud beag, ruadh às a' fhraoch an àird. Thog e 'dhòrn 's chuir e na fìaclan às a' rìgh.

An sin, thàinig a' rìgh dhachaidh 's ghobh e a' leabaidh, leis a' tàmailt.

Agus, eh ... thuirt a', an t-oighr' ris an tànaisean, "Feumaidh sinn dhol, feuch' am faic sinn, am faigh sinn fìaclan na h-athar."<sup>3</sup>

'S chuir iad bàt' air a' -- flod, 's bha iad 'dol a ... folbh ach, bha Loircean --

"Dè mu dheidhinn Loir--?"

"Och, thoir leis Loircean, nì e an gnothach, [bios] e 'cur mach luath dhuinn."

Thug iad leis Loircean 's ... dar bha iad leth-sligh' thuirt iad ri Loircean ... thuirt an darn' fear ris an fhear eil' diubh, "Ruith thus' an àird gu bàrr a' chrann, seall dè chì thu."

Char e an àird bi-- [criomag] bheag -- "O!" thuirt e, "bi thu fhèin 'dol àird sin, cha tèid mis' an àird ann."

Ach, thuirt iad ri Loircean, char Loircean an àird gus a' deach e an àird gus a' mhullach aig a' chrann. 'S chunnaic e eilean, 's bha an t-eilean 'dol 'na thein'. 'S stiùir ... Loircean, thuirt e riuth' dèanamh air an eilean. Dh'innis e dhoibh 's chum e 'dol e, 's dar ruig iad bha an t-eilean 'na thein' 's, agus eh.

Thuirt Loircean riuth' a-rithistich, "Ruith nìs mach agus faigh fìaclan na h-athar, tha na fì-- tha iad bhàn sin," thuirt e, "a's aon de na caistealan an sin."

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<sup>1</sup>This is a private recording made by Dr. John Shaw, who has kindly allowed me to use it for this thesis.

<sup>2</sup>Here B.S. identifies the "*oighre*" ("heir") and the "*tànaisean*" ("second son") as "the butler" and "the cook", because at the end of the story these two brothers are revealed to be illegitimate sons of the queen fathered by the butler and the cook.

<sup>3</sup>"*fìaclan na h-athar*": "our father's teeth"; see Dorian 1978: 97-100 for forms of the possessive pronoun in East Sutherland Gaelic.



Char an t-oighr' mach 's, o, cha d'rinn e ach dìreach am bàt' fhàgail agus thill e air ais, "Cò [bha ...] an sin," thuirt e, "airson bìthinn-- gum bìthinn ròist' ... air an tein'."

Ach, char Loircean mach 's, sgaoil e le 'bhoisean 'n tein' air ais mar sin. 'S dh'fholbh e.

Bha caisteal òir, 's caisteal airgiod, 's caisteal copair ann. Agus 'se fomhairean a bh'annta uileag. Ach rinn Loircean air gus a' rinn e an caisteal òir dheth 's a' caisteal airgiod dheth 's. 'S thog e leum aig an dor',<sup>4</sup> thuirt e ris airgiod-- fìaclan 'athar chur mach na deagh chòmhrag air a shon.

Thuirt a' fear bh'aig a' -- ceann a' bhòrd, "Ruith' mach," thuirt e riuth' 's, "thoiribh staigh ceann an fhear sin dhomh gu' dèan mis', eh, balla-- eh, cluich, eh ... balla, balla-bùird dheth." Char aid uileag mach ach, sheall Loircean orr' 's rug e air 'n fhear bu mhoth' ceann 's bu chaoil' cas, 's sgleoc e, sgleoc e 'n t-eanchainn às na h-uile gin diubh.

"Haaa," thuirt am fomhair ris fhèin, "chan eil am fear beag tha mach, chan eil e don[a]."

'S char e fhèin mach. Nis, bha, bha boiroinnaich ann cuideachd, thàinig i a-nuas, bha bean aig'. Bha e fhèin 's Loircean 'sabaid ach, thug Loircean an togail ud dha 's chuir am fomhair a-bhàn 's, thug e mach 'chladheamh 's gheàrr e an ceann deth.

Thug e nis leis a' bhean aig a' fomhair, bha i cuide ris. Agus na h-uile dad a bhuineadh dhith, cìr 's sgàthan 's, na coin-- lomhainn chon bh'aic'-eas.

"Nis," thuirt i ri Oisean (*sic*), "[...] rinn thu a' seo e, ach cha dèan thu aig a' chaisteal òir e. Tha am fear sin ro làidir air do shon. Ach inns' mi dhut," thuirt i, " 'rathad a gheobh thu e. Bhrist e 'bogha-saighead aige, 's bios thus' 'dol chà-- chàradh bhoghachan-saighead. 'S cha leig thu leas ... [an duin'], gu marbh thu leis a', leis a' bhogh'-saighead e. Ach, tha ball-dòbhran air a bhathais aig', 's ma gheobh thu ann a' sin e, tha -- marbhas thu e."

"O, *all right*."

Ruig e sin 'n caisteal òir, 's rinn e 'n dearbh rud, thug e glaoth aig a' doras, fìaclan athar [riuth']. Agus. Thàinig iad mach uileag 's, [...] Loircean, rug e air a' fear bu mhoth' ceann 's bu chaoil' cas 's, sgleoc e 'n t-eanchainn às an fheadhainn eil' [diubh].

"Ahh," thuirt a' fomhair ... O [...] bha e, uill, 'dèanamh -- càradh a' bhogh'-saighead aig'. 'S chàraich, eh, Loircean 'bogh'-saighead.<sup>5</sup>

"Cò air a dh'fheuchas mi e?"

"O feuch orm fhèin e, feuch orm-as e."

"O, chan fheuch, chan fheuch," thuirt [e], "chan fheuch mi oirbh-s' e."

"O feuch," thuirt e. "Cha dèan e dad orm-as, feuch thus' orm. Thèid sinn mach, ma tha."

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<sup>4</sup>"dor": for "*doras*" ("door").

<sup>5</sup>Here the narrative may seem unclear to the reader, as a number of details are compressed and the episode is somewhat confused.

Chaidh iad mach 's, dh'èirich bideag dhen a' ghaoth 's thog e dosan an fhomhair air ais, 's chunnaic Loircean a' ball-dòbhran. Tharraing e 'm bogh' 's "tiùc!"<sup>6</sup> — [...] thuit e. [*B.S. laughs.*]

Nis, thug e leis a' bhean bha sin 's, aig a' fomhair sin, 's thug e leath' i, 's thug e leis na coin aic', 's thug leis na h-uile dad a bhuineadh dhith 's. Thàinig e nis gus an àit' gum biodh a' -- mus do ruig e na caistealan, bha aig' ri dhol bhàn ann an toll a's an talamh, 's bha iad 'leigeil e bhàn ann a' lioft, 's a thogail nis an àird rithisti' gum biodh i -- [coit 'tighinn], tharraing an àird.

"Hmm," thuirt Oisean (*sic*) ri' fhèin. Chuir e an àird le bean an toiseach. Shìn an fheadhainn [n dithis] bha an àird, bha aid 'na chèil' airson a' bhean, 'sabaid sios 's suas air a son, cò aig a bhiodh i. Ach ...

"Hmm," thuirt Oisean (*sic*), "chan eil mi cinnteach an tèid mis' an àird a's a' lioft seo gus nach tèid."

Fhuair Oisean (*sic*) clach mhòr, clach mhòr, mhòr, 's thug e e 's chuir e ann [a' shin]. 'S -- chunnaic iad an àird bideag dheth ach a' sin -- "Ah," thuirt e ris fhèin, "bha mi 'dèanamh dheth gur e sin [...] dhèanamh, char leigeil air ais."

Uill -- char càch dhachaidh.

Char iad ... char iad -- [fhuair na -- 'rìgh], 's bha iad 'cur fìaclan searrach ann.

Ach, thàinig Oisean (*sic*) mach 's thug e na fìaclan á phocaid, chuir e am beul 'athar e. Bha e cho math 's a bha e riamh.

Nis, bha na coin, 's bha na h-uile dad aig Oisean (*sic*) -- a' chìr, 's sgàthan, 's na h-uile dad a bh'aic', bhuineadh dha na boirionnaich seo. [*Pause.*]

Bha an t-oighr' 's a' tanaisean a' sin 's bha iad -- bha bean aig', ach ... chaidh iad mach dan mhon' 'lath' sin 's, thug a' bhean glaodh air na coin 's, lean aid i. 'S char i (*sic*) leath'.

Thàinig e air ais, dh'innis e a dh'Oisean (*sic*) e -- o, dha Loircean.

"O, thug a' bhean iad, 's thug i glaodh orr' ... a' bhean bha siod, 's thug i [bhuainne] na coin, 's chan eil fhios a'm dè bha iad [...], dè tha mi 'dol a dhèanamh a-nis."

"Och, chan eil fhios agam, ach ... na gobh thus' ort dragh," thuirt Oisean (*sic*), "gheobh thu sin," thuirt e, dhomh.

Fhuair Oisean (*sic*) na coin 's, bha a-nis a' sgàthan 's a' chìr aic', 's na fàinneachan aic', cò bha 'dèanamh sin? O, nì a' gobhainn aid. Char e gus a' ghobhainn 's dh'innis e dha, dè bha e ag iarraidh, 's chunnaic (*sic*) e *gliog, gliog, gliog*<sup>7</sup> -- "Oich!" thuirt a' -- thuirt an t-oighr', tha 'n gobhainn ag obair, tha 'n gobhainn ag obair," dar a bha e 'cluinntinn e 'dèanamh "*glug*" air an innean aig'.

<sup>6</sup>"tiùc": a sound representing the noise of a shooting arrow.

<sup>7</sup>"gliog, gliog, gliog": sounds representing the noise of a smith working.

Fhuair Loircean a' sin 's, chum aid, 's thug e dhan an t-oighr' aid airson a thoir dhan a' ... a' bhean air ais.

Ach, ah.

Nis, aon de na boirionnaich, bha i an tòir air, air Oisean -- air Loircean. 'S fhuair i ... rud ris an can' aid "staidhs" -- no *corset* a their iad riuth' an diugh. 'S lìon i làn rudan e 's chuir i air a', air a' bhàn-rìgh e, 's tharraing i e 's *tight, tight* e.

"Cò leis tha Loircean, cò leis tha Loir--? Innis dhomh-as, cò leis tha an t-oighr'? Cò leis -- cò athair an t-oighr'?"

"O, an còcaire, 'n còcaire ... athair dhan an t-oighr'."

"Cò athair ... an ... tànaisean?"

"A' *butler*." -- *The butler* bha athair dha.

"Ach cò athair Ois -- eh, Loircean?"

"A' rìgh, a' rìgh."

"Ah," thuirt i, "dh'aithnich mi gur e 'rìgh -- gur e leis a' rìgh a bha Oisean (*sic*)," thuirt i.

"Bha fhios agam," thuirt i, "gur e a' rìgh a [bh'ann]."

"O," thuirt i, "thoir dhiom seo," thuirt i, "tha e 'dol tromham."

"Uill," thuirt i, "bha, bha agam -- bha agam ri faighinn a-mach dhiot cò leis bha Loircean."

"O, leis a', leis a' rìgh tha Loircean."

"O, ma tha," thuirt e (*sic*).

'S phòs Loircean agus a', an tè a thug e às a chaisteal òir... Dè dh'èirich dhoibh an dèidh sin, chan eil fhios agam gun deachadh aid air ais gus a' chaisteal, gus nach deach.

STÒIRIDH LOIRCEIN

**Date: 1 July 1994**

**Collector: Carol Zall**

*[Note 1: The following transcript is a conversation about the story rather than a full telling of the story. However, since B.S. covers all of the main points of the story here, I have plotted it in the version chart and thus include it here. There are many interesting aspects of this conversation, not least of which is the way in which B.S. switches back and forth between Gaelic and English.]*

*Note 2: The tape recorder malfunctioned during this session. The resulting recording has been "salvaged" to the extent that this was possible, but the quality of this transcription has been affected. Where square brackets enclosing full stops [...] are used, the recording is impossible to make out.]*

**CZ:** Loircean -

**BS:** Eh -

**CZ:** Ann an tòiseach a' stòiridh -

**BS:** Uh-huh -

**CZ:** Um, nuair a bhios iad a-mach air a' mhon' a' sealg, tha mi a' smaointinn, dh'èirich braoisgean beag biorach ruadh -

**BS:** Uh-uh -

**CZ:** -- ás a' fhraoch.

**BS:** Aye.

**CZ:** Agus, agus, char fiacail a' rìgh, char iad chur ás --

**BS:** Chuir e fiacalan ás a' rìgh --

**CZ:** Aye. Dè, dè th'ann am "braoisgean"?

**BS:** Huh?

**CZ:** Dè th'ann am "braoisgean"? 'Se -- dè seòrsa duine a th'ann?

**BS:** A wee -- it could be -- a leprechaun you know.

**CZ:** Uh huh, uh huh.

**BS:** Come up and then, hit the king in the face with [his teeth and], knocked his teeth out.

**CZ:** Aye, 's, carson a bha e ag iarraidh-- Why did he want to knock his teeth out? [CZ laughs and BS then laughs] -- Is there any --

**BS:** I don't know, I cannot give you an explanation for that.

**CZ:** Right, okay. I just --

**BS:** That's, that's when the king was out with his, eh ... staff, hunting.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** And the man come up the heather and gave him a [...] <sup>1</sup> in the mouth and, knocked his teeth out.

**CZ:** Out they came, aye.

**BS:** 'S, Loirc--, Loircean Luath.

**CZ:** Right. Loircean Luath?

**BS:** Aye.

**CZ:** Dè th'ann an "luath"?

**BS:** Ashes.

**CZ:** Oh aye, uh huh.

**BS:** Aye, the ashes.

**CZ:** 'S, does "Loircean" mean anything?

**BS:** Aye, Loircean, he'd be sitting in the ashes.

**CZ:** And why would he be sitting in the -- in ashes? Where would he be sitting in --

**BS:** Well now that's where you got -- well, if they have an outside fire, you know --

**CZ:** -- uh huh --

**BS:** -- and the ashes scattered around them.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** He could [settle] them. His kilt, he would be wearing a kilt, you see --

**CZ:** Ah ha. And "kilt" is --

**BS:** That's, uh, the same story as the Maraich'.

**CZ:** As the Maraich'?

**BS:** The Ma-- is it, wait 'til I see --

**CZ:** As the Maraiche Màirneal, no?

**BS:** Aye.

**CZ:** Is it?

**BS:** Yes, it's the -- well, he's in, he comes in there, into that story too, because it's the Maraich' that put them away, across with his boat to the island where he --

**CZ:** -- uh huh --

**BS:** Loircean got his father's teeth again.

**CZ:** So is it the Maraiche Màirneal who takes him away in the boat?

**BS:** Aye, he took the men away in the boat.

**CZ:** Uh huh, uh huh.

---

<sup>1</sup>Here it sounds as if B.S. makes a noise to indicate a blow to the mouth.



**BS:** And, eh ... the king's, eh ... cook and butler went too.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** An t-oighr' 's an tãaisnear.

**CZ:** Aye, aye.

**BS:** And. And they were supposed to go to look for their father's teeth.

And eh, "Och," he says, "will we take him?"

"Och," he says, "yes, we'll take Loircean with us."

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** "He'd be handy for, he'll be cleaning the ashes out for us."

**CZ:** Oh, right.

**BS:** "We'll take Loircean."

**CZ:** And that's why he's "Loircean Luath"?

**BS:** Aye, Loir'n. And then, one of them had to climb the mast of the boat to see. And the, eh, an t-oighr', he only went up about six inches.

**CZ:** [Laughs.]

**BS:** And he came back down again. "Oh," he says, "be going up there yourself," he says, "and see." And Loircean went right up to the top of the mast, and he steered the ship, told him to -- the captain to steer that ship to this island, and the island was on fire.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And now he says, Loircean said to him this, "Get your father's teeth now, get out."

"Oh who will go out in that fire? [A place taking fire] -- we'll be burnt." And Oisean jumped out and he put it, the flames back with his palms of his hand.

**CZ:** Was it Oisean or was it Loircean?

**BS:** Loircean.

**CZ:** Loircean, uh huh.

**BS:** Loircean. And, eh. Then before they would get to the castle where the ... teeth were, they had to go down in a lift.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm. Cliabhag.

**BS:** Underground.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** And there was --

**CZ:** Underground?

**BS:** Underground.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** Eh, there was a gold castle, and a silver castle, and a copper one.

**CZ:** And were the castles underground?

**BS:** Aye, they were on the, on the ground.

**CZ:** On the ground, or underneath the ground?

**BS:** On the ground, aye, but you had to go underground to get to them.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** So, thuirt Loircean riuth', 'Nis, am bheil si' ag iarraidh fìaclan ar athar, feumaidh sibh dol gus a' chaisteal, agus a' fomhair fhaicinn. Tha iad a's a' chaisteal òir.

**CZ:** Tha.

**BS:** They were not going down the, the lift. Bha iad -- Loircean went down the lift, and --

**CZ:** -- mmm hmm --

**BS:** He came to the, to the castle then. He gave a shout to put his father's teeth out.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** And a long, big giant came out, and [ ] Loircean was fighting but, Loircean knocked him over then, took his sword out and, whipped his head off. And he got his father's teeth.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** Then he went to the -- aye. He went to the, before he got there, he met the wife, he met this, eh, giant's wife. And she says, "Oh," she says, "if he'll see you, he'll kill you." She says, "Come in. Come in," she says. And she hid him.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** In the house.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And she says, "I'll tell you what's wrong," she says, "he broke his bow, you see, bow and arrow."

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And, he (*sic*) says, "If you'll come, if you're mending bows," she says, "that'll -- and this is the way to get him." He (*sic*) says, "There's a, a mole on his brow," he (*sic*) says. "And if you can get him there," he (*sic*) says, "you can easily kill him." But he (*sic*) says "To try without that," he (*sic*) says, "get him there, it's no use."

"Oh, all right," says Loircean. "I'll try it."

When he came he was ... the big giant came and he got him and, Loircean was awful frightened of him.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And he was putting up his hand then. Oh and the wife said to him, "Och, leave that man," she said, "he'll mend your, your bow."

"Will he?"

"Oh yes."

Loircean says, "I'll mend your bow for you."

Oh, Loircean mended the bow and, it was all right now for firing.

And he said to the, to the giant, "Who will I try it on."

"Och try it on myself, try it on me."

"Och no, no, no," he says, "I'll not try it on you. It'll kill you."

"No, no," he says, "you won't kill me."

But they went out and, a breeze of the wind went and blew the giant's *dosan* back, and Loircean saw the, the mole and, [BS makes a shooting noise] he just got him right there and, he dropped him. [Pause.] And now he got the wife, too.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And, then he went along to the other castle and the same thing happened there. But himself and the giant was fighting there and he, cut the head off him. And that was the, the co-- the silver castle.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And now he took that lady away with him, too. And he took her dogs.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And, her, her comb, and her brush with him. And Loircean had all this coming back.

**CZ:** Aye.

**BS:** Now he went to the place where he would, where the, where the lift was going down now -- he had to go up.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And he put one of the ladies up, and the ones that was in the top, the, the, an t-oirghr' 's an tànaisean, they were, they were fighting for the woman, woman, who would have her.

"Oh, [*sios*], wait, wait," she says, "there's a better one than me coming."

Loircean was wanting to come up, but Loircean was fly, he says, "I don't know," he says, "I don't think [...]."

They had to pull him up, you see. He put a big heavy stone on it. And they took up a wee bitty, but they let it drop and, Loircean said, "I thought that would happen."

**CZ:** Hmm.

**BS:** Then he gave it a pull again and they put the lift down again and he put the, the one that was in the -- that lady that was in the --

**CZ:** Silver?

**BS:** -- gold castle up. Oh if the fight with the silver was big -- they fought and fought and fought for her then.

"Oh," she says, "wait 'til there's a better one than me coming."

And then the silver one came back.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** And then. They had one each then. But, eh, she [...] they had the one in the gold castle. She says, "I'm no going out of here," she says, "'til you take this man up."

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** "Because these things belong to me."

When they heard that, they took Loircean up then, in the lift. And, they got a boat.

[*Pause*] So then they, they sailed for back and, the t'oighre, he, he took teeth out of his pocket.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** But not his father's teeth, goodness knows what they -- horse's teeth. And he was shoving them in his father's mouth. And he couldn't do it, but when Loircean came, he put his own teeth back in. He was as good as gold, but.

[*Pause*] Och, the coin, bha lomhainn-chon aic'. 'S char iad mach a shealg a' latha seo 's. Bha an tè bha 'sa chaisteal air-- òir cuide riuth'. 'S thug an t-oighr' leis na coin.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** 'S, dar a bha e iad 'sealg, thug an tè a bha 'sa chaisteal, [char i] còmhla ri na còin, 's thàinig iad far, far a' robh i, 's [...] [cuide rith].

'S thàinig an t-oighr' air ais, thàinig e air ais dha, thuirt Loirc, Loircean ris, "Cà' beil na, na coin?"

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** "O, thug a' boirionnach bha seo, thug i [còmhla ...]. 'S cha b'urra dhomh-as am faighinn air ais bhuaip', chum i aid, cha tig' aid dhomh-as.

[*Tape quality deteriorating significantly.*]

"O, nach tigeadh?"

"Och, ma tha," ars es', "tha sin -- [...]."

Ach. Chaidh Loircean gus a' ghobh'.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm. Blacksmith a bh'ann, no -- an gobha?

**BS:** Aye, an gobhainn, aye, blacksmith, aye.

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** Char e gus a' ghobha'. 'S dh'innis e, dh'innis Loircean dha, dè a thachair.

"Nis," thuirt e, "tha 'sgàthan 's a' chìr aic', agus, eh, tha gloinne aic'."

**CZ:** Mmm hmm.

**BS:** "O, ta," thuirt a' gobha', 'gobhainn, "nì mis' [...]."

"Thug Loircean dha an làimh aig', 's thug e dhith, dhan a' dhuine, 'chìr, 's 'sgàthan, 's fhuair e nìs, [thug] iad air ais. 'S thug e dhith-eas aid, 's thug e dhan a' bhean e 's bha e nis ceart gu leòr.

Agus, "Nis," thuirt i ri Loircean.

Thug i nis a' bhàn-rìgh leis [*pause*] mathair Loircein, thug i a-staigh e (*sic*). 'S rinn i, st--staidhs -- a corset -- she made a corset, I don't know what it is 'sa Ghàidhlig, staidhs.

**CZ:** 'Seadh, uh huh.

**BS:** And she filled it up -- with pins in, things that would hurt her. And he p-- she put it in the queen.

"[...] a' rìgh, [...] bhan-rìgh e?"

"Chan e."

"O, huid! huid! huid!"

"Cò athair an t-oighr'?"

"O, budlar -- butler, butler."

She gave another pull to it then.

"O, huid! huid! huid!."

[...] "Cò athair Loircein?"

"O, a' rìgh, 'rìgh."

"O," thuirt í, "bha fhios agam gur e sin, gur e a' rìgh a bh'ann."

He must have been good to him when he was the king's son. He -- [...].

So the one in the, in the castle go-- in the gold castle, in the gold castle --

**CZ:** Mmm hmm --

**BS:** -- and Loircean married. But the other two ....

**CZ:** What happened to them?

**BS:** They ... had to ... to look for another one for themselves.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** The one in the, the co-- the silver castle and the copper castle skedaddled and left them.

[*BS and CZ laugh.*]

**CZ:** They didn't go with the cook and the butler?

**BS:** No.

**CZ:** Uh huh. What happened to an t-oighre and an tanaistear?

**BS:** Well that's the way that neither of them got anything.

**CZ:** Uh huh. And did they get --

**BS:** They didn't get a thing.

**CZ:** -- the boot?

**BS:** But the, the king ordered them away.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** Of course, but he ... made the king, Loircean the king.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** And the rest was ....

**CZ:** 'S sin ceann na stòiridh.

**BS:** Aye, aye. Ceann na stòiridh.

**CZ:** Uh huh. 'S nuair a, nuair a ruig Loircean taigh an fhomhair --

**BS:** Heh?



**CZ:** Nuair a, nuair a ruig Loircean taigh an fhomhair --

**BS:** Fhuair, fhuair, fhuair Loircean, 's ....

**CZ:** Thug e glaoth air an doras. 'S dè thuirt e? -- "Cuir a-mach fiacail m'athar." Dè thuirt e? An tuirt e -- ?

**BS:** "Cuir a-mach fiacail m'athar-as, na deagh chòmhrag air an son."

**CZ:** Dè tha "comharrachadh"? "Na deagh chomharrachadh" -- dè tha sin?

**BS:** Well, that he was threatening the, the, the ... the giant, you see.

**CZ:** Uh huh, agus.

**BS:** If he wouldn't ha' put them out that he would eh, have to, take the consequences.

**CZ:** Uh huh, sin "comharrachadh," uh huh.

**BS:** And the, the ki-- the giant said to the, his, his staff, "Ruithibh mach agus thoiribh beag (*sic*) ceann an fhear bheag tha siod dhomh-as, staigh dhomh-as, gum bi mis' 'cluich balla-bhùird leis."

**CZ:** Uh huh, dè tha "balla-bùird"?

**BS:** Fhios a'd, you know, you could mean a, a ball and a board.

**CZ:** Uh huh. Uh huh.

**BS:** 'Cluich balla-bùird.

**CZ:** Oh aye, aye.

**BS:** Aye.

**CZ:** Uh huh. So he wants to play with --

**BS:** Aye.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** When they went out.

**CZ:** Agus, "balla-bùird snaga"?

**BS:** Aye. Loircean, caught the one with the biggest head --

**CZ:** -- uh huh --

**BS:** -- and the small, the smallest legs.

**CZ:** Uh huh.

**BS:** And he scattered the brains out of the other ones. Then the giant himself come out. And then they had a go, and. But of course, Loircean being the king's son, he ... killed the giant.<sup>2</sup>

**CZ:** Uh huh, aye.

**BS:** And took his wife away.

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<sup>2</sup>Here with the words "of course" B.S. indicates his understanding of the "rules" (and roles) of Gaelic storytelling: since Loircean is the king's son, he "of course" kills the giant.

## STÒIRIDH LOIRCEIN

**Date:** 31 March 1995

**Collector:** Carol Zall

A' rìgh, bha e mach a's a' mhon' 'sealg. 'S dh'èirich rudeigin às a', às a' fhraoch. 'S thog e 'dhòrn, 's chuir e,<sup>1</sup> thug e dhan a' rìgh a's a bheul e 's, chuir e na fìaclan às. 'S thàinig a-nis a' rìgh dhachaidh 's leis a' tàmailt, ghobh e a' leabaidh, tàmailt [...] na fìaclan chur às.

'S bha, bha dà mhac aig', Loircean agus, eh, fear eil', 'n t-oighr' 's an tanaire.

Agus thuirt aid, thuirt an t-oighr' ris an tanaisean, "O feumaidh sinn dhol agus fìaclan na ... fìaclan na h-athar fhaighinn."

'S dh'fheumadh iad nis, bàt' fhaighinn 's soitheach.

"Och, bheir sinn leis Loircean, airson bith -- nì e, nì e airson bhith 'cur mach luath 'sa mhadainn. Bheir sinn leis Loircean. Chaidh Loircean cuide riuth'-s'.

Thuirt an t-oighr' ris an tanaisean, "Streap, ruith an àird an crann," thuirt e, " 's faic thu dè chì thu."

Och, cha deach e an àird ach -- cha deach e an àird idir.

"Och," thuirt e, "chan urrainn mis' dhol an àird e."

Char Loircean an àird, char Loircean gus a' mhullach aig'. Agus, eh, *dh'sheilig*<sup>2</sup> e a' bàt', gus an eilean bha seo. Bha eilean, bha e 'dol 'na thein', bha tein' ann.

'S thuirt an darn' fear ris an fhear eil' diubh, thuirt an t-oighr' ris an tanaire, "Ruith thus' mach nis."

A-mach chaidh e.

"Nis," thuirt Loircean riuth', "ma tha si' ag iarraidh fìaclan na h-athar, shin far a' beil aid."

Char a', an t-oighr' mach, "Huid! huid! huid! huid!" thuirt e ris, "chan eil curaidh ac' mach ann a' sin."

Ach, cha d-- cha deach an tanaisean idir ann.

Ach dh'èirich Loircean 's thug Loircean leum dhen a' bhàt', 's sgaoil e 'bhois 's chuir e 'làimh- - 'n tein' air ais le 'bhoisean. 'S ruig e, 's bha caisteal òir, 's caisteal airgiod ann.

C.Z.: Mmm hmm.

B.S.: 'S caisteal copair. Agus na h-uile gin dhe sin, a bha, eh, fomhair ann. Agus sin far a' robh fìaclan a' rìgh. Shin a', shin a' fear bha 'cur na fìaclan às a' rìgh. 'S char aig Loircean [] ... bha aig' ri dhol a-bhàn ... fo talamh.

<sup>1</sup>Here B.S. bangs his teacup on the table to make a noise to accompany the action of the king being hit in the mouth.

<sup>2</sup>Gaelicisation: "he sailed".

CZ: Mmm hmm.

BS: Gus a' faigheadh gus a' -- *underground then, to get to the castles*, [gus a'] faigheadh e gus a' chaisteal. Char e bhàn an Cliabhan Toll bha seo, char e a-bhàn. 'S ruig e an caisteal copair. 'S thug e *rap* air a' doras, thuirt e riuth' fiacail an athar chur mach, dha-as.

Thuirt a' fear bha staigh, "Ruith mach 'fhearaibh," thuirt es', " 's thoiribh ceann an fhear tha sin dhomh-as, gu' bi mi 'cluich balla-bùird dheth."

Ach, chaidh iad mach, ach rug Loircean air a' chiad aon diubh thàinig mach. 'S rug e air 's [rug] e, eh, air, air a' chasan air 's, sgleog e 'n t-eanchainn a's an fheadhainn eil' leis.

"Tha-a-a," thuirt a' fear bha a-staigh, "tha e colach gu bheil a' fear beag tha mach shin, gu bheil e sgaiteach. Thig orm fhèin dhol mach."

Ach thàinig a' sin a' fomhair fhèin mach 's, bha e fhèin 's Loircean 's e fhèin a chèil' 's, smuainich Loircean, 's thug e an togail ud dha-as, 's thog e 'chladheamh 's, sgud e an ceann deth. 'S, char e staigh 's, choinnich e, bha bean a's a h-uile caisteal. Bha a' bhean, bha 'sa chaisteal air-- eh, chopair, [thàinig] i cuide ris.

"Nis," thuirt i ris, "dar a thèid thu gus a' chaisteal òir, a' fear tha sin," thuirt e (*sic*), "bhris e 'bogha-saighead aig' 's. Bhris e. Agus feumas thus' gu' bi thusa 'càradh bhoghachan-saighead. Uill, cha leig thu leas dhol a-rithist," thuirt i, " 'rathad eil'. Ach," thuirt i, tha, tha [*slight pause*] ball-dòbhrain air a' bhathais aig', 's ma gheobh thu ann a' sin e, " thuirt e (*sic*), "leis a, leis a' saighead, marbhas thu e. Ach cha leig thu leas dhol a-rithist airson an fhear [seo]," thuirt i. "Bios e ro làidir air do shon."

Agus, "*All right*," thuirt Loircean, " 'se sin a nì mi."

Ach, dar a ruig e ... nis an caisteal airgid, 's bha, bha an aon rud aig' ri dhèanamh sin. Bha aig' ris a' fomhair a mharbhadh 's. Bha boireannach ann 's thug e leis a' boireannach, a' bhean cuide ris. Bha nis dithisd aig', an tè bha 'sa chaisteal, eh, chopair, 's a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal airgid.

Bha e nis 'dol gus a' chaisteal òir. 'S thug e *rap* air a' doras airson fhiacail an athar chur mach 's. An aona rud thuirt a' fear, thuirt a' fear bha staigh, "Ruith' 'fhear', ruithri<sup>3</sup> mach, 's thoiri' 'm fear sin staigh dhomh."

Chaidh iad mach 's, 'sgleoc e 'n t-eanchainn á càch dhiubh. Chaidh an sin a' fomhair e fhèin mach 's, och, bha, bha Loircean 'cà-- càradh bhoghachan-saighead.

"O thig staigh, thig staigh," thuirt e. "Thig staigh."

O chàirich nis Loircean 'bogha-saighead.

"Ach cò air a' dh'fheuch' mi ?"

"O feuch orm fhèin e, feuch orm fhèin e."

"O chan fheuch mi," [thuirt] Loircean. Thuirt e gu' ciùrradh e--

<sup>3</sup>"*ruithri[bh]*": a plural imperative form of the verb *ruith* ("to run") which B.S. occasionally uses; he also uses this form in the 16 April 1993 recording of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*.

"Cha chiùrr, cha chiùrr."

Thàinig iad mach 's, gus a' doras, bha Loircean -- 'bogha-saighead aig' 's.

"Feuch orm e."

"*All right*," thuirt Loircean.

Dh'èirich osag dhen a' ghaoth, bìdeag gaoth 's, shèid e ... a dhosan air ais, dosan an fhomhair. 'S chunnaic Loircean, 's ghobh e *tiùc*,<sup>4</sup> 's. Thuit e. Mharbh e e. 'S thug e nis leis a' -- an tè bha 'sa chaisteal air-- òir, 'boireannach. Char e sin air ais, agus dar a thàinig e air ais, dh'fheumadh an fheadhainn bha an àird -- gu h-àird, 'lioft chur bhàn airson 'thoir an àird. 'S dh'iarr e orr' seo chur bhàn. 'S chuir Loircean, chuir e 'm boireannach bha 'sa chaisteal chòpair aig', chaidh i an àird. Bha an dithis bha an àird, bha iad 'sabaid air a son.

" 'Se leam-as a tha i --"

"Chan e, ach leam-as a tha i --"

"Chan e, ach leam-as a tha i--" 's bha iad 'sabaid ri chèil', cò aig a bhiodh i.

Ach thuirt i riuth', "Fuirichibh, fuirichibh, fuirichibh," thuirt i. "Na bi-- tha tè nas, nas brèaghai' na mis' 'tighinn."

Thàinig sin 'tè bha 'sa chaisteal airgid. Bha ... aid aig a chèil' a-rithistich, an t-oighr' 's a' tànaisnear.

"Chan e, seo mo thè-eas!"

"Seo mo thè-eas!"

"Chan e."

"O, fuirichibh," thuirt i. "Tha tè nas fheàrr fhathast 'tighinn, na mis'."

Uill, Loircean, bha e gu h-ìosal, 's bha a' -- lioft 'g obrachadh. Thug e ... rud eil' anns a' -- clach mhòr, 's chuir e a's a' rud e 's, char e an àird bìdeag 's leig iad leis tuit'.

"Hmm," thuirt Loircean, "bha mi 'dèanamh dheth," thuirt e, "gur e sin bha si' 'dol a dhèanamh, gu' robh si' leigeil mis' bhàn."

Ach ... fhuair Loircean nis, eh, *jewel* mòr [den] a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal, eh, chòpair, 's a' tè bha 'sa chaisteal airgid. 'S thug e air ais -- thug e staigh air a' bhàt' aid. 'S bha e 'dol ga' thoir' air ais gu ... an oighreachd aig a' rìgh aid. [*Pause*.]

'S bha iad 'g iarraidh ... thuirt iad ri Loircean, "Feumas tu mo chìr, 's mo sgàthan" -- 's bha coin ac', lomhainn-chon -- na coin ac' fhaighinn, mial-choin. Thug Loircean leis na -- 'chìr 's a' sgàthan, 's thug e leis na coin. 'S a' latha seo, bha 'rìgh 'dol a-mach a-rithisti' air -- gus a' mhonadh. 'S char a', an tè, tè bha 'sa chaisteal òir, 's thug i bhuaith' na coin. 'S dh'fholbh leath' na coin leis [...]. Cha robh gin, o, cha robh gin aig Loircean.

An t-oighre 's an tànaisnear. Nis, thàinig nis [*pause*] ... Cailleach nan Cearc, mar a theireadh aid rith'.

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<sup>4</sup>Here B.S. makes a sound -- represented here as "*tiùc*" -- to illustrate the sound of the shooting arrow.

C.Z.: Mmm hmm.

B.S.: Thàinig i staigh gus a' -- gus a' bhàn-rìgh. 'S fhuair i *corsets* -- staoidhs. 'S cuir i rudan don<sup>5</sup> ... dhe na *corsets*.

"Trobha," thuirt, "trobhad," thuirt is' ris a' bhàn-rìgh. 'S chuir i seo, 's tharraing i.

"O," ghlaodhaich i, "tha thu 'ga mo chiùrradh, tha thu 'gam chiùrradh. Tha thu 'ga mo chiùrradh."

"Cò leis tha a' t-oighr'? Cò athair 'n t-oighr'?"

"O, a' rìgh, a' rìgh."

Thug i tarraing eil': "O, oi -- !" <sup>6</sup>

"Cò leis a tha e?"

"O, leis an t-oighr', leis an t-oighr' a tha e, an t-oighr' a tha e."

O, bha an tè a' sin --

" 'S cò leis tha Loircean? Cò athair Loircean?"

"Uill," thuirt is', "fear eil', 'n tònair'."

Thug i tarraing eile, "I[nns'] cò th'ann, cò 'athair?"

" 'Rìgh, 'rìgh. 'Rìgh athair Loircean."

"Hmm," thuirt i, "bhithinn 'dèanamh dheth sin, gur e a' rìgh athair Loircean."

Agus, phòs an tè bha 'sa chaisteal òir agus Loircean. 'S bha i fhèin 's na coin, 's na ... rudan a bh'aic', a' sgàthan 's a cìr, 's a h-uile nì cuide ri Loircean. 'S fhuair Loircean fiacail an athar, 's chuir e 'na bheul aid. 'S bha 'athair cho toilichit 's thàinig e dhe 'leabaidh, bha e cho math 's a bha e roimhe, a' rìgh, dar a fhuair e a chuid fiacalan air ais.

'S bha 'n t-oighr' 's an tònaisnear, char aid-eas ... chur air folbh. Cha robh feum dhaibh.

[Pause.]

C.Z.: Agus sin agad -- sin agad ceann na stòiridh.

B.S.: Shin ceann 'stòiridh.

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<sup>5</sup>"don": short for "dona" ("bad").

<sup>6</sup>Here the queen is exclaiming in pain as the corset is tightened on her.



AM MARAICHE MÀIRNEAL

**Date:** 1974

**Collectors:** Donald Archie MacDonald and Alan Bruford

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1974/26**

'Se rìgh òg-- rìgh na, na, na h-Eireann a bh'ann. Agus, mar sin fhèin, bha e 'na bhantrach, ach bha balach aig'. Agus, phòs e sin rithist. Agus, eh, nis, bha nis am ba-- eh, an giollan bha e cuide ri 'athair agus ri 'stepmother. Agus, eh, dar thàinig e sin 'na bhalach, thuirt a, a mhàthair ris -- uill, thuirt a, leas-mhàthair dha -- thuirt is' gu' robh i 'dol a 'thoir' dha prèasant.<sup>1</sup>

Agus, "Och," thuirt 'balach rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèasant dhuibh fhèin," thuirt e.

"Och, chan eil sin gu dad. Bheir mis' dhut seo."

'S thàinig i suas 's bha lèin' aic'. O, chan fhac' a', 'm balach lèin' riamh bha cho brèagh' rith'.

"Shin a'd," thuirt i, "lèin'."

"O," thuirt a' balach, "tha a' lèin' brèagha."

Agus, eh, fhuair e sin 'lèin' 's, lath' no dhà an sin chuir e, bha e 'dol 'ga dhreasaigeadh<sup>2</sup> fhèin, 's chuir e a' lèin' air. Bha e cho pròiseil às a' lèin ùr fhuair e, bha i cho brèagha. Ach cha robh i fad 'sam bith air dar a dh'fhairich e a' lèin' 'curlaigeadh<sup>3</sup> mu' cuairt air a mheadhan seo 's.

" 'S dè," thuirt e, " 'tighinn air a' lèin'?"

Ach, churlaig i 's churlaig i 's thàinig i an àird a' seo air. Agus -- gus a' deach i timchioll air an amhaich. Agus 'se seo, dar thàinig i timchioll air 'amhaich, 'se a bh'ann biast de nathair.

"Ah uill," thuirt a' balach, "fhuair mis' prèasant."

Chunnaic sin 'rìgh e 's, 'athair e 's, thuirt e ris, "O," thuirt e, "thug i prèasant dhut."

Agus. Nis, a's na tìdean sin, bha boirionnach ac' ris an canadh aid "Cailleach nan Cearc."

Agus, thuirt 'athair ris, "Ruith agus faic Cailleach nan Cearc."

O char e sin 's, chunnaic e e (*sic*). Bha e 'buidhinn ri Cailleach nan Cearc.

"O," thuirt a' bhean ris, "tha sin cianail, a bhròinean," thuirt i, " 'rud fhuair thu ann a' sin a chur ort."

"Bheil gin idir ann," thuirt e, "a leigheas mi, no a bheir seo dhìom?"

"Uill," thuirt Cailleach nan Cearc ris, "an aon aon as aithn' dhomh-as a leigheasas thu, ach ciamar a tha thu 'dol a dh'fhaighinn a' sin? Tha boirionnach," thuirt is', "ann am bàrr Eilean Loch Lèug, 's nam biodh thu ann a' sin, cha chreid mi nach leighiseadh i thu." Agus. "Ach,"

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<sup>1</sup>Gaelicisation: "a present".

<sup>2</sup>Gaelicisation: "to dress himself".

<sup>3</sup>Gaelicisation: "to curl".

thuirt e -- thuirt i ris, "ciamar a tha thu 'dol a dh'fhaighinn ann? An aon aon chuireadh ann thu, 'se 'Maraiche Màirneal. 'S tha es', tha e seachd bliadhn' air a' leabaidh, 's tha e dall, 's tha e bodhar."

Ach, thug e sin leis, cho luath 's char aid gus 'Mharaich'.

"Och," thuirt am Maraich' riuth', "chan urr' dhomh-as èirigh às a' leabaidh, 's chan urr' dhomh dad dhèanamh, ach tha bàt' ann a' sin, 's ma chuireas si' fhèin mach air flod i, tha si' dì-beaht' airson a faighinn."

Char aid sin bhàn gus a' bhàt' 's, dh'fheuch iad cur mach air, air a' mhuir ach, och, cha dèanadh aid -- cha ghluaisleadh iad i. Thàinig aid sin air ais 's, thuirt iad ris nach dèanadh iad dad dhen a' bhàt', nach b'urr' dhoibh cur mach.

"Ach uill," thuirt a' Maraich' riuth', "feuch am faic si' mo thriùbhsair."

Thug e sin dha a thriùbhsair 's, char e staigh 'na thriùbhsair 's, chuir e 'aodach air 's, thug iad bhàn gus a' bhàt' e.

'S dar thug iad bhàn gus a' bhàt' e, "Nis," thuirt e, "cuiribh mo ghualann ris a' chuinnlean aic'."<sup>4</sup>

Chuir iad sin a ghuallean ris a' chuinnlean aic', 's thug e aon tilgeil dhith 's chuir e trì fad fhèin mach air a' mhuir i. Agus. Dh'fholbh iad an sin, 's bha iad 'dèanamh gu bàrr Eilean Loch Lèug.

'S dar a chunnaic a' bhean, "O, uill," thuirt i, "thig e às an iarrach no as uarach, ach shin agai' bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaiche Mhàirneil 'tighinn aon uair fhathast."

'S bha i sin mach, 's bha i 'dèanamh *welcome* ris a' Mharaich'.

"Dè," thuirt i ris, "an *cargo* th'agad 'n dràs'?"

"O," thuirt e, "tha *cargo* agam an dràsdaich nach robh riamh a leithid agam. Seo a'ad e," thuirt e 's, thug e an àird am balach air 'n *deck*, 's a' chiad sùil a thug i air, "Cho luath," thuirt i, " 's gun toir thu do chasan, thu fhèin 's do bhàt', às an eilean [...]," thuirt i, "cuiridh mi do chuid fhèin agus am bàt' a'd [gu] ghrunnd, ma bheir thu 'fear seo air tìr a' seo."

"Ach uill," thuirt am Maraich', " 's measa tha e na shaoil mi," thuirt e 's, "bha mi an dùil," thuirt e, "gun dèanadh thu rud ris. Uill, uill," thuirt am Maraich', "bidh sinn 'dol air ais, ma tha."

Agus, eh, thuirt e ris a' bhalach bha seo, air a' robh nathair timchioll air amhaich, "Ruith mach, ma tha," thuirt e, "agus thoir staigh dà pheil<sup>5</sup> uisg', bhios againn air a' bhàt'."

Dh'fholbh e 's thug e an dà pheil 's char e mach. 'S dar fhuair es' am balach mach air tìr, thog am Maraiche a shiùil 's, thionndain e 'm bàt' air ais, 's ghobh e air ais dhachaidh.

<sup>4</sup>"*ris a chuinnlean aic'*" "to her prow" (i.e., to the prow of the ship); "*cuinnlean*" or "*cuinnean*," more usually meaning "nostril," here takes the meaning "prow" when used of a ship.

<sup>5</sup>Gaelicisation: "pail".

'S dar a thàinig a' balach sheall e 's, bha an dà pheil uisg' aig 's, bha a' bàt' air folbh. Ach thig e shin na peileachan bhuaithe, 's thàinig e air ais. 'S bha lios mhòr aig a' bhoirionnach bha Loch Lèug. Bha mòran measan ann, ubhlan 's, 's rudan dhen t-seòrs' sin. Bha e ag ith' sin -- air tao' mach na leas a bha iad, tao' mach. Bha e ag ith' [pàirt dhiubh], ach thàinig nighean a' bhoirionnach bha seo. Thug i sùil 's chunnaic i e. 'S thuirt i ris, "O," thuirt i, "thig a-staigh don lios, thig staigh. Thig staigh," thuirt i, " 's ith, eh, na measan."

"O, cha tèid," thuirt a' balach, "cha tèid mi staigh," thuirt e. "Uill, uh, tha mis'," thuirt e, " 'na mo bheothach fiadhaich," thuirt e, " 'cur feagal air na h-uile gin," thuirt e, "leis a' rud a th'orm a' seo. Agus, tha feagal orm," thuirt e, "dhol faisg air creutair."

"O thig thu a-staigh," thuirt i. Ach, ruith i sin a-staigh don taigh, 's thuirt i ri 'màthair, "O," thuirt i ri 'màthair, "tha, tha gille mach a' sin," thuirt i, " 's chan fhaca mi gille riamh as brèagha' na e. Nach toir thu staigh don lios e?"

"O, can ris thighinn staigh don lios."

Thàinig e sin 's thàinig a' sin a' bhean eil' mach, 'màthair. Thug i sùil air 's.

"Trobadh," thuirt i. "Thig staigh," thuirt i.

"Tha e colach do dh'fholbh-- dh'fhàg iad mis' a's an eilean," thuirt e.

"Uill, bhon a dh'fhàg aid thu," thuirt i, "thig, thig staigh," thuirt i. Thug i sin staigh e 's. Agus, eh ... o, ghobh nighean a' bhoirionnach bha seo, thuit i [...] air a' bhalach, cha bhiodh i beò mur fhaigheadh i e.

Ach thuirt a' sin a màthair rith': "Eh, an cailleadh thu 'chas air a shon?"

"Cailleadh."

"An cailleadh thu do ghaoirdean air a shon?"

"Caillidh."

"An cailleadh thu a' broilleach air a shon?"

"Chailleadh."

"Uill, uill ma tha," thuirt i, "chì sinn dè nì sinn dar thig a' madainn."

'S bha triùir mhic aig a' bhean bha seo, bha 'chail', agus bha -- aon chail' agus triùir mhic aic'. Agus, thuirt i ri aon de na balaich, "Ruith mach," thuirt i, " 's faigh grèim, 's marbhaibh a' mult as raimhre gheobh sì', 's thoir staigh dhomh e."

Thàinig sin 'latha 's, char na balaich mach don a' mhon' 's, fhuair aid mult mòr bha seo 's, mharbh aid e 's. 'S dh'fheann aid e 's thug iad staigh e 's, thug aid dha 'màthair e. Fhuair is' *frying pan* mòr, mòr, 's chuir i air an tein' e. Agus, eh, chuir i 'chail' 'na suidh' mu choinneimh a' bhalaich, bha aid 'suidh' an coinneachainn a chèil'. Agus, eh, dar chuir i is' 'na suidh', thug i oirr' 'm broilleach aic' fhosgladh. Agus, uh, bha i 'tionndain an, a' rud bha seo, 'n fheòil bh'air a' phan, 's bha am beothach bha seo, bha an t-acras oirr' 's bha i, 'g iarraidh, seo ith'. Ach chuir i car dhith 's, 's chuir i sin an ath char dhith. ach do dhèanamh sgeulachd ghoirid dheth, thug i na h-uile car a bh'ann, 's leum i dhan a' phan -- *frying pan*. 'S bha nis am pan

teth 's, loisgeadh e i, 's thug i sin leum a-rithist dheth 's, an àit' dhith dhol air ais air amhaich a' bhalaich, rug i air broilleach a' chaileag. 'S o, bha a' bhean deis' air a son 's bha sgian mhòr aic', 's dar a bha i air broilleach a' chaileag, thug i sgud air 's gheàrr i 'm broilleach dhith 's, thuit i air an ùrlar 's chuir i mias oirr' 's, chuir i 'cas air uachdar a' mhias. 'S thug i sin a' chail' leis 's, char a dotaireachd 's, bha i -- thàinig i ceart gu leòr. Leighis i i 's'. Bha am balach 'na bhalach mar bu chòir dha bhith, cha robh beothach air 's bha e 'na bhalach brèagha. Bha, fhuair e clìor às 'nathair.

"Nis," thuirt i ris. Dar a thog i a' mias dhe 'n ùrlar, bha a' lèin' ann a' shin a-rithistich, cho brèagha 's a chunnaic thu.

"Shin a'd," thuirt i, " 'm prèasant a thug a' leas-mhàthair a'd dhut."

'S, chuir i 'san tein' i. 'S rinn a' lèin' aon urchair, dar chuir i 'san tein' i 's, thug i leis leth an t-simileir cuide rith'.

Uill, bha a-nis 'm balach ann a' sin cuide ris a' bhean 's 'chaileag 's phòs aid. Agus, bha e sin air a', cuide ris a' [s]luagh bha seo air an eilean 's -- e fhèin 's a' bhean aig' 's a bhràithrean-cèil', a mhàthair-chèil'. 'S bha, eh, Cailleach nan Cearc ac'-as cuideachd, agus a mac. Nis bhiodh a mac -- Cailleach nan Cearc -- agus am balach bha seo, bhiodh aid gu math tric cuideachd -- glè thrì cuideachd. Agus, bhiodh a' sin, a mhàthair, bhiodh i 'sealltainn as dèidh a' chaileag bha seo. 'S bha fhios aic' air na h-uile dad mu dheidhinn na caileag.

'S thuirt, eh, Cailleach nan Cearc ri, ri 'mac fhèin: "Nam biodh thus' *clever*," thuirt i ris, "dh'fhaodadh thus' bhith a's an àit' aig'-eas."

"Och," thuirt es', "ciamar a bhithinn-eas as an àit' aig a', aig a' bhalach?"

"O, math gu leòr. Dh'fhaodadh thus' 'g ràdh ris gu' beil fhios a'd air a' bhean aige. Agus, dh'fhoighnich[ea]s e<sup>6</sup> 'Ciamar tha fhios a'ad air a' bhean agam?' --

'Inns' mi dhut, ciamar--' Innis dha:<sup>7</sup> 'Uill, tha cìr òir aic' airson bhith 'cìreadh a falt.'

'Och, dh'fhaodadh thu sin fhaicinn.'

'S an ath rud a dh'innseas thu dha: 'Mura creid thu mi, innsidh mi rud eil' dhut. Tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic'.'

Agus cuiridh mi geall dar a chluinneas e sin, gobhas shin an t-ìadach e, agus, chì thu gu, gun dèan e, eh, ['n t-olc] agus gu' fàg e, 's gheobh thus' an t-àit' aige-eas."

Ach 'se seo a bh'ann nis. Bha e mach 's, "Uill," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "tha bean bhrèagha agad."

<sup>6</sup>Note that the following exchange is spoken entirely by *Cailleach nan Cearc* (the hen-wife). It is she who is narrating to her son the exchange of dialogue which he and the hero should have. I have italicised the rehearsed dialogue in order to make this section as clear as possible for the reader. Following these instructions by the hen-wife, her son takes her advice by having a similar conversation with the hero.

<sup>7</sup>Here the hen wife is interjecting the direction "*Innis dha*" -- "tell him".

"O, tha," thuirt a' balach, "tha fhios agam air sin, agus bean bhrèagha 's bean mhath a th'ann."

"Och, tha," thuirt e, "ma tha i cho math sin, eh, chunna' mis' i 's, chunna' mi 'cìreadh 'ceann i. Tha fhios a'm dè sheòr' cìr a th'aic'."

"Och, dh'fhaodadh thu 'faicinn 'cìreadh 'ceann."

"'S chunna' mi nas motha na sin. Tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic'."

"O, mhic na fear ud!" thuirt e ris agus, thug e buill' air. 'S leum e sin 's char e dhachaidh, 's rug e air a' bhean aig' fhèin, 's thug e grèidheadh cianail dhith. 'S bhreab e i 's, thog e sin air 's, dh'fhàg e. 'S dh'fholbh e 'na bhodach baigeir. Thog e poc', 's dh'fholbh e 'na bhodach baigeir. Bha e 'dol bho àit' gu àit'. Agus, bha e 'dol throimh choill' lath', bha rathad ann 's bha e 'dol throimh choill' 's. Chual' e glaothaich a's a' choill'. Dh'èisnich e 's, chual' e sin an glaoth a-rithistich. 'S char e far a' robh e agus 'se seo duin', 's bha e 'na laighe, air an talamh, 's bha e glè thinn.

"O, dè th'ort?" thuirt a' baigeir.

"O, tha [pause] tinneas orm," ors e "ach, tha fuaran ann a' sin, 's na' faighinn-eas deoch às an fhuaran sin, bhithinn-eas cho math 's a bha mi roimhe."

"'S nach fhaigh thu deoch às an fhuaran," thuirt a' balach, "nach eil e cho -- nach fhaigh si'--?"

"O," thuirt e, "tha -- tha a' fuaran air, air a gheardaichteadh<sup>8</sup> le beothaichean fiadhaich." 'S thuirt e, "Tha -- tha an dràsdaì," thuirt e, "tha leòghann ann. 'S tha cuach aig a' leòghann 'na, 'na spòg. 'S ma gheobh thus' a' chuach sin á spòg a' leògh', tha an dràsdaì," thuirt e, "tha iad 'nan cadal. 'S ma thèid thus' agus ma gheobh thu sin dhomh-as, agus, eh, deoch, bidh mis' gu math," thuirt e, "agus bios *command* an t-saoghail agad-as às a' chuach."

"Uill," thuirt a' balach, "chì mi dè nì mi."

'S mar a thuirt e, bha a' leòghann 'na shuidh' aig an fhuaran, 's a', eh ... bha a' chuach bha seo 'na, 'na dho-- 'na spòg. Thàinig a' balach glè fhiathail<sup>9</sup> 's, thug e, dar a bha e gu bhith aig' thug e leum air 's spìon e, eh, a' chuach á, eh, spòg a' leòghainn. 'S nis dhùisg aid, 's thuirt e ris a' leòghann, e, clìoraig' air folbh<sup>10</sup> bho 'n fhuaran, och, [] 's fhuair e a' chuach bha seo. Dh'fholbh na h-uile beothach bh'aig an fhuaran, theich aid. 'S thug e sin deoch às dhan duin' 's, dar thug e dha a' deoch, 'n ceann treiseag dèidh sin, d'èirich an duin' go 'chas agus, "O," thuirt an duin', "tha mòran taing agad. Tha mis'," thuirt e, "a-nis, cho math 's a bha mi roimhe. 'S nis," thuirt e, "tha cuach agad-s' ann a' sin, agus deoch 'sam bith dh'iarras thu, na àit' 'sam bith dhen t-saoghal dh'iarras thu bhith, bios thu ann," thuirt e, "dìreach ann a' *flash*. Agus," thuirt e, "ceòl -- bith 'sam bith th'ann, tha h-uile dad agad às a' chuach."

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<sup>8</sup>Gaelicisation: "guarded".

<sup>9</sup>"*fiathail*": for "*fèathail*," "quiet".

<sup>10</sup>Gaelicisation: "to clear away".



Ach sin, smuainich a' balach air fhèin 's, "Ach, ma tha," thuirt e ris, "[folbhai] mi dràsdaì air ais, eh, ann an Eilean Loch Lèug."

'S bha e sin air ais, aig oighreachd a' màthair-chèil' 's, aig a' bhean aig'. Agus, bha e rèis', bha e 'na bhodach baigeir. 'S thàinig e a-staigh 's, o, cha d'aithnich *one* diubh e. Bha e cho fad' air folbh 's a char e á aithn' orr'-s', leis an fheusag 's a' falt 's na h-uile dad a bh'air. Agus. Bha e 'dèanamh ceòl dhoibh 's. 'S cha do dh'èirich a' bhean aig' fhèin -- a' chail', a' bhean a phòs e -- cha do dh'èirich i á leabaidh bhon a' lath' a d'fholbh e gus an oidhch' thàinig es' air ais leis a' cheòl. 'S leis a' cheòl a bh'aig', dh'èirich is' gu h-uilinn, 's bha i 'g èisneachd ris a' cheòl. Char iad sin, thàinig thid' dhol a laigh', 's char iad laigh' 's.

Agus, dar chaidh iad laigh', dh'èirich a' chail', 's thàinig i gu 'bràthair, bràthair a b'òig' dhith, 's thuirt i ris, "Dè dhèanadh thu an dràsdaich, na' tigeadh an duin' agam-as air ais? Dè dhèanadh thu ris?"

"Ooo," thuirt esan, "nan tig' e seo." Thuirt e, "Phronnainn na h-uile cnà-- cnàimh tha 'sa bhodhaig aig'."

Agus, dh'fhàg i sin es', 's char i sin gus a', am fear meadhonach, 's thuirt i 'dearb' rud ris: Nan tigeadh an duin' aic', dè dhèanadh es' ris?

"O," thuirt e, "chuirinn-eas," thuirt e, "air [...]"<sup>11</sup> e ... na' tigeadh e."

Ach, chaidh e (*sic*) sin gus a' bhràthair bu shin'. Agus, eh, thuirt e ris (*sic*) uh, d-- dar a char i staigh don a' rùm aige, 's ghnog i 's, "Dhia glèidh mi," thuirt es', thuirt es' rith', "ciamar a dh'èirich thus'?" thuirt e, "tha bliadhnachan nach robh thus' air do chas. Ciamar a dh'èirich--?"

"O, chan eil fhios agam," thuirt i, "ach fhuair mi neart nochd," thuirt i, " 's, dh'èirich mi, 's tha mi air mo chas. Ach tha mi 'dol do dh'fhoighneach seo," thuirt i, "dhìot," thuirt i. "Na' tigeadh an duin' agam-as air ais, dè dhèanadh thus' ris? Am biodh thu gu dona dha?"

Agus, eh.

"O," thuirt es', "cha bhithinn mis' gu dona dha. 'Se an fhoill chaidh a dhèanamh air fhèin, agus breugan chaidh a dhèanamh dha-as, agus 'se sin," thuirt e, "a rinn sin."

'S dar chunnaic i sin gu' robh 'bràthair a bu shin', gun deach e leatha, "Uill, ma tha," thuirt i, "shiod a'd e. Thàinig e nochd." Thuirt i, "Ged [nach] do dh'aithnich gin dhibh agai'-s' e, dh'aithnich mis' e."

Agus, "Och, uill," thuirt es', "a' fear a lot, 'se a leighis."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>The unclear phrase here sounds like "*làn a mhaid*": possibly the brother is indicating that he would trounce the hero in a match of strength.

<sup>12</sup>"*a' fear a lot, 'se a leighis*": "the man who caused the wound is the man who healed [it]"; this piece of set dialogue, which occurs in all of Brian's recordings of this story except that of 31 March 1995, is a good illustration of what Alan Bruford (1969) refers to as "... the general tendency of some story-tellers to conduct dialogue in what sounds like a series of proverbs...." (195). For Brian such proverb-like dialogue is the exception and not the rule, although as discussed in Chapter Four, much of his dialogue is formalised.

Agus, eh, thàinig sin a' madainn 's. Agus, eh, dar a thàinig a' mhadainn, dh'innis i sin dha màthair e 's. Agus, eh, dh'innis i sin e dhan a h-uile gin, gur e a bh'ann 's, och uill, char a' sin a h-uile dad -- math, ceart gu leòr. Bha is' air a cas, 's bha i na b'fheàrr 's.

Agus, eh, char beirsinn air Cailleach nan Cearc, agus air a mac, agus char an cur ann a' baraill' teàrr, 's *paraffin* dhòrtadh orr', agus maids,<sup>13</sup> a chur 'nan tein'. [*B.S. laughs.*]

Shin agad a-nis, ceann na stòiridh sin. Tha -- dh'fhuirich e fhèin 's is' air an oighreachd ann a' sin 's chan eil fhios agam-as nach eil iad an sin fhathastaich.

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<sup>13</sup>Gaelicisation: "a match".

## AM MARAICHE MÀIRNEAL

**Date: 14 April 1993**

**Collector: Carol Zall**

Stòiridh a' Mharaich'. Agus, eh. A' rìgh, bha rìgh, bha e pòsd' 'n darn' triob, bha dà bhean aig'. 'S bha, bha balach aig', leis a' chiad bean. 'S chuir a' -- bha -- a' mac, agus a' rìgh, bha aid 'fuireach cuideach, a's an aon -- a's a' chaisteal. 'S chuir a' leas-mhàthair fios air a' ghill', gu' robh i ag iarraidh fhaicinn. 'S dh'innis e seo dha 'athair, dhan 'rìgh.

"Och," thuirt a' rìgh ris, "carson nach deach' thu a shealltainn air do, air do mhàthair?"

Uill, char e, char e sin a shealltainn oirr', air a' leas-màthair. 'S dar char e a-staigh, chuir i fàilte air.

"O," thuirt i, "tha mi 'dol thoir' dhut prèasant."

"O," thuirt a' balach rith', "cha tug mis' riamh prèasant dhut fhèin."

"O, ta, bheir mis' dhut-s' i," thuirt i. 'S thàinig i le lèin' dha. *You understanding?*

**C.Z.:** O, tha mi 'tuigsinn.

**B.S.:** Thàinig i le lèin'. Bha a' lèin' brèagha. [*Pause.*]

Uill, dar a chuir e a' lèin' air, dh'fhairich e 'gluasd i. Thàinig e sin, dh'fhàg e sin 'gluas', thàinig e dhachaidh chaidh e air ais gu 'athair. 'S dar a thàinig e air ais gu 'athair, dh'fhairich e a' lèin', bha i 'curlaigeadh 's curlaigeadh 's, gus an tàinig e an àird gu 'amhaich. 'S dar thàinig e an àird gu 'amhai', 'se a' nathair bha timchioll air an amhai-- air an amhaich aig', nathair mhòr.

'S thuirt 'athair ris a' ghill', "O, thug, thug do mhàthair prèasant dhut, ceart gu leòr. Dè tha thu 'dol a dhèan' le sin? Uill," thuirt a' rìgh ris, "chan eil fhios agam-as," thuirt e, "chan eil gin ann nì feum dhut, ach tha bean ann a' -- ann a' -- ann a' bàrr Loch Lèug, dh'fhaodadh gun dèanadh is' feum dhut."

" 'S cò thèid sin?"

"O, thèid am Maraich' ann a' sin, 'se am Maraich' a thèid a' sin-ach."

Uill, char e sin gus a' Mharaich'. 'S thuirt a' Maraich' ris, bha a' Maraich' dall.

"O," thuirt a' Maraich', "tha mis' dall a-nis agus, ma chuireas thu fhèin am bàt' mach air a' mhuir --."

Ach dh'fheuch iad ris a' bhàt' chur mach, ach dh'fhaireach oir' chur mach.

Char e sin air ais gus a' Mharaich' a-rithist, 's thuirt e ris nach b'urra dha, nach b'urr' dha a' bàt' ghluas'.

Thug e leis a' Maraich' air làimh, gus an tàinig iad gus a' bhàt', 's thuirt a' Maraich' ris, "Cuir mo ghualann ri cuinnlein a' bhàt'."

Chuir e a ghualann ri cuinnl', 's thug a' Maraich' aon *heave* 's chuir e mach air a' mhuir i.

"Nis," thuirt a' Mharaich', trobh' staigh air a' bhàt'."

'S char iad staigh s', 's bha aid sin 'dol air adhart gu Loch Lèug.

Thug a' bhean an Loch Leug sùil 's, thug i, thug i a' nighean.

"Cha chreid mi," thuirt i, "nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaiche Mhàirneil 'tighinn aon uair fhathastaich."

Dar thàinig e, thuirt i ris, "Dè, dè an *cargo* th'agad 'n dràsdaich, a Mharaich'?" thuirt i.

"O," thuirt e, "ca-- *cargo* nach robh a-riamh roimh' agam. Agus seo a'd e," thuirt es'. Chunnaic i e.

"O," thuirt i ris, "man as luaithe a dh'fhagas thu seo, 'se sin 's fheàrra dhut, thu fhèin agus an *cargo* agad, thoir mach á seo e."

Agus, "Uill," thuirt e ris, thuirt a' Maraich' ris a' bhean, "feumaidh sinn uisg' glan fhaighinn," thuirt e, 's chuir e an gill' dh'iarraidh dà pheil dhe dh'uisg' glan, bhiodh ac'.

'S bha chail', eh ... nighean a' bhean, bha i mach 's, bha a' balach 'g ith' -- bha lios a dh'ubhlan, 's bha a' lios thairis air a' ghàraidh, 's bha e 'g ith' pàirt dhe na measan, air tao' mach a' gharaidh.

'S thug a', thug a' boirionnach ghlaodh ri', "O," thuirt i, "thig a-staigh," thuirt i, "thig a-staigh don a' lios."

"O," thuirt e, "cha tèid mi staigh, 'se beothach fiadhaich a th'annam-as."

'S gheobhadh e rud dha fhèin 's chuireadh e rud am bial a' nathair.<sup>1</sup>

'S thàinig i staigh gu 'màthair. "O," thuirt i ri 'màthair, "tha gill' ann a' sin," thuirt i 's, " 's chan fhac' mi gill' riamh as brèaghai' na e. 'S cha bhi mis' beò mur fhaigh mi e."

"Uill," thuirt a màthair rith', "dè dhèanadh thu, an cailleadh thu làimhean air a sho', gaoirdean air a sho'?"

"Caillidh."

"An caillea' thu, do bhroilleach air a shon?"

"Caillidh."

"*All right*, ma tha," thuirt i. Thuirt i sin ris na mic aic', bha triùir mhic aice fhèin. Eh, a' bhean bha Loch Lèug, bha trì-- thuirt i ris a', aon de na balaich, "Ruith' a-mach," thuirt e (*sic*), "agus faigh a' mult as raimhre a gheobh si', 's marbhaibh e, 's thoiri' an àird e dhomh-as a' seo."

Fhuair iad a' mult. 'S, mharbh aid e, 's thug e an àird e dhan a' bhean. 'S dar a bha i -- chuir i a' *frying pan* air an tein' 's bha i a' tionndain seo 's, bha -- chuir i a' chail' leis fhèin, a' nighean

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<sup>1</sup>This wonderful detail should not go unnoticed: the boy is snacking on fruit from a garden, and as he finds himself with a huge snake wrapped around his neck, he not only feeds himself but also puts some of the fruit into the snake's mouth.

fhèin 'na suidh', mar sin, mar tha thus' a' dràdaich. 'S es' mar seo ma tha mis'.<sup>2</sup> 'S rùisg i a' bhroilleach aic' a-bhàn gu -- gu -- gu sin. 'S bha -- chuir i a' balach 'na shuidh' air an tao' eil'. [Pause.] 'S bha i a' tionndain a', an fheadail air a' phan 's tionndain 's, thug a' bhiast, thug i car aisd', bha i 'toir' car aisd', s thug i car 's, car aisd', gus an tàinig i gus an tein', 's thug i aon leum sin air, air broilleach a' chaileag. 'S thog a màthair a' cliobhar,<sup>3</sup> 's sgud i a' broilleach dhith, 's chuir i, eh, thuit e a-nuas, chuir i mias air 's chuir i cas air uachdar a' mhias.

[Pause.]

Nis, dar a [...] na h-uil' dad, thog i sin, "Seo a'd," thuirt i -- ris a' -- ris a' -- mac a' rìgh, "seo a'd 'm prèasant fhuair thu."

Thog i [a' mh--] a' mhias, bha 'lein' ann air ais a-rithistich. 'S thog i an lèin' 's thilg i a's an tein' i. 'S char i a-mach 's rinn i aon urchair, cha mhòr nach tug i leth an t-simileir leis cuide rith'.

'S nise, phòs a' chail' agus an gill'.

'S bha a-nis, an uair sin, bhiodh -- canadh aid 'Cailleach nan Cearc', bha i mun cuairt air an àit', agus bha mac aic'.

'S thuirt i, thuirt i ri a mac, "Ach," thuirt i, ris -- bhiodh Cailleach na' Cearc, bhiodh i 'sealltainn as dèidh a' chail' bha seo. Bhiodh i 'ga cìreadh 's 'ga glanadh 's. Thuirt i ri -- ris a', ri, ri, a mac fhèin, thuirt i, "Nam biodh thus' [] gli-- glic, dh'fhaodadh dha àit' seo, dh'fhaodadh seo bhith agad fhèin, an t-oighreachd seo bhith agad."

"Ciamar a bhi' agam, bhi' agam-as?" thuirt a mac rith'.

"Uill, 's urra dhu'-as gràdh ... gu' robh thu, gu' beil fhios a'd air a' bhean aig'. Can ris, 'Tha, tha fhios agam,' ars a màthair, 'bha mis' cuide rith' 's tha, tha cìr òir aic', 's tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic'.' 'S dar a chluinneas e sin," thuirt e (*sic*), "gobhas e ... an [stuirt].<sup>4</sup> 'S gheobh thus' an t-àit'. 'S fagas e is'," thuirt i.

'S rinn e seo 's, ghobh e 's c-- eh -- fhuair -- dar a dh'innis e seo dhan duin' aic', ahhh, char e dheth 's, "O," thuirt e, "mic, mic a' fear ud-as!" Thuirt e, "Tha mi 'dol á seo, cha bhi gnothach agam a' seo tuillidh."

Agus, eh, dh'fholbh ... uh ... thilg e bhàn 's [ghlaodh] i ris.<sup>5</sup> 'S dar a thilg e sin i, 's dar a dh'fholbh es', ghobh a' chail', ghobh i a' leabaidh. 'S bha i 'na laighe, 's cha b'urr' dhith gluas' ás a' leabaidh, leis an tàmailt.

<sup>2</sup>"... chuir i a' chail' leis fhèin, a' nighean fhèin 'na suidh', mar sin, mar tha thus' a' dràdaich. 'S es' mar seo ma tha mis'" ("... she put the girl by herself, the daughter herself [was] seated, like that, like you are now. And he was like this, as I am"): here we have an interesting instance of Brian's comparing the physical reality of the storytelling context to the action taking place in the story.

<sup>3</sup>Gaelicisation: "a cleaver".

<sup>4</sup>*Stuirt*, s.f., huffiness (Dwelly 1988: 909). Thus: "he'll take the huff".

<sup>5</sup>I take this last phrase to mean "he threw [her] down and she called out to him".



'S dh'fholbh an gill' 's, bha e 'dol 's bha e 'dol 's, chual' e glaothaich, cuideigin 'glaothaich, 's char e throimh 'choill'. Agus ... fhuair e duin' ann a' sin 's bha e 'na laighe 's.

"Dè th'ort?" thuirt e.

"O," thuirt e, "tha stad uisg' orm.<sup>6</sup> O," thuirt e, " 's tha, tha mi am pian cianail. Uill," thuirt e, "tha fuaran ann a' sin, 's nam faighinn-eas deoch às an fhuaran, bhithinn ceart gu leòr. Ach tha e a' dràdaich air a gheardaich' leis na beothaichean fiadhaich."

Bha leòghann ann 's --.

"Tha leòghann," thuirt e, " 's tha 'chuach aig' 'na dòrn. Ach tha iad 'n dràdaich 'nan cadal. 'S ma thèid thu socarach, bheir thu 's spionas thu, eh, a' chuach á, á dhorn. 'S àit' 'sam bith a bhios thu ag iarraidh, na ceòl 'sam bith a bhios thu ag iarraidh, tha thu ann, ann an dìreach ann a' *wink*."

Fhuair e a' chuach 's char e, 's thug e á spòg -- thug spòg a' leòghainn e, 's thàinig e air ais 's thug e deoch chun a' duin' bha -- bha goirt.

'S char e, "Nis," thuirt e ris, "uair 's àit' sa' bith 'sa beil thu ag iarraidh, tha thu dìreach ann ann a' prìobadh na sùil."

"O uill," thuirt e, "tha mis' ag iarraidh dhol air ais gu Eilean Loch Lèug."

Bha e air ais mar sin, 's char e staigh 's -- an taigh 's -- a' chail' a phòs e, bha i air a' leabaidh, bho a dh'fholbh e gus an tàinig e air ais, 's bha e 'cur ceòl dheth 's, dh'èirich i gu h-uilinn. 'S thàinig i gu 'bràthair.

"Dè," thuirt i, "dhèanadh thu air a' -- air an duin' agam-as, nan tig-- nam [faigheadh] thu dha?"

"O, dè dhèanainn air?" thuirt e, "bhreabainn-eas mach air an doras e."

Chaidh i sin gu a' bràthair bu shin'. 'S thuirt i ris an aon rud, dè dheanadh es'?

"Och," thuirt es', "dè dhèanainn-eas air? 'Se an fhoill char dhèanamh air fhèi', 'se na breugan char an inns' dha fhèin. Agus 'se sin a rinn e [...]," thuirt e. "Agus tha e colach," thuirt e, "gur e am fear a lot, gur e a leighis." Thuirt e, "Cuin' a [chunna mi thu], chunnaic mi thus' às -- 'na do shuidh' a's a' leabaidh?"

"O, ma tha," thuirt i, "shin a'd e, thàinig e."

Agus. [Pause.] Phòs am balach agus a' chaileag, 's bha aid air an oighreachd, 's dh'fhaodhadh gu' beil iad a' sin fhathastaich. [B.S. laughs.]

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<sup>6</sup>"...tha stad uisg' orm": Brian has explained to me that the man is ill because he cannot pass water.

## AM MARAICHE MÀIRNEAL

**Date:** 31 March 1995

**Collector:** Carol Zall

**B.S.:** Uill, 'rìgh, 's bha a' rìgh, bha e pòsd' an darn' triob. 'S bha mac aig' leis a' chiad bean. Agus aon latha, mac a' rìgh, fhuair e fios gu' robh ... a leas-mhàthair, 'leas-mhàthair, ag iarraidh fhaicinn. *That's his stepmother.*

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** *That she was sending for him, that she had a present for him. And his father said -- he says, "Will I go? --*

*"Yes. Tha, bi 'dol," thuirt es', [...] ruith 's faic i."*

Nis ruig e, dar a ruig e, thuirt is' "Tha mi 'dol a thoir prè--"

"O, cha tug mis' prèasant dhuibh fhèin riamh."

"O, cha tug," thuirt i, "ach, mo thogair."

Thàinig i le lèin'.

**C.Z.:** Mmm hmm.

**B.S.:** "O," thuirt a' ... eh, an gille, "tha a' lèin' brèagha."

Chuir e a' sin a' lèin' air 's, cha robh i fad' 'sam bith air dar a dh'fhairich e 'curlai' a' rud sin, 'dol mu' cuairt air. 'S churlaig i 's churlaig i, gus a' deach i mu' cuairt air an amhaich. 'S thàinig e sin air ais gu oighreachd 'athar. Bha seo timchioll air 'amhai', 'm beoth' seo, timchioll air 'amhaich.

"O," thuirt e, thuirt e ri 'athair, "shin a'ad am prèasant a fhuair mis'," thuirt e, "bho mho leas-mhàthair."

"O, gu dearbh," thuirt a' rìgh, "thug i prèasant math dhut. O, thug staigh a-nis -- thoir staigh Cailleach na' Cearc. Tha fios aic'-eas dè -- inns' is' dhut dè nì thu."

Thug e staigh nis [Caill'] nan Cearc, 's thuirt [e rith'].

"Uill," thuirt Cailleach nan Cearc, "chan eil gin seo nì feum dhut, ach tha boirionnach ann an, ann an Eilean Loch Lèug. 'S mur dèan is' dad riut air do shon, cha dèan gin eil' e."

*"All right."*

Fhuair e an sin soitheach.

[*Pause. Then in a tone of voice as if he's just remembered what comes next*]:

Am Maraich'. Thug e [...] a' Mharaich', soitheach a' Mharaich' Mhàirneal. [*Pause.*] Bha 'm Maraich', bha e dall. 'S chaidh e ris a' bhàt', ach cha b'urr' dha *stem* dèanamh, cha b'urr' dha cur mach air a', air a' chuan. Ach char iad sin air ais, thug e a' Maraich', leis an làimh e.

"Cuiribh mo cho-- mo ghualann ris a' chuinnlein aic'," thuirt e.

Chuir iad a ghualann ri sròin a' bhàt, 's thug iad *heave* dhith 's chuir e mach air flod i.

"Nis," thuirt e, "bi 'dol, staigh air."

Char iad sin staigh air a' bhàt 's, dar a ruig iad Eilean Loch Lèug, 's thug a' bhean a's, a's an eilean mach 's thug, "Uill," thuirt i, "cha chreid mi nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaich 'tighinn aon uair fhathastaich. Bheil fhios dè a' *cargò* a th'aig' a' dràsdaich?"

Thug i glaoth ris, "Dè a' *cargò* th'agad 'n dràsdaich [...]?"

"O," thuirt e, "*cargò* nach robh a-riamh agam, roimh'."

Bha iad nis 'dol air ais, 's thuirt e ris' a bhalach, ri' 'gill', "Ruith thus' mach," thuirt es', "faigh thus' dà pheil dhe dh'uisg' glan, *fresh*, a bhios againn 'dol air ais."

'S char [] 'gille mach, 's bha a' dà pheil aig'. 'S bha lios aig, eh -- lios, lios ann a' shiod, bha measan air a' lios, bha -- taobh mach a' lios bha e 'toir' [a' phoit] air na measan [....]. Thàinig a' chail' bha a's a' taigh mach, 's chunnaic i es'.

'S chaidh i staigh gu a màthair, "O," thuirt i, "tha gill' ann a' sin," thuirt i, "agus, cha bhi mi beò mur fhaigh mi e."

"O, nach bi?" thuirt i. "Can ris thighinn staigh don a' lios," thuirt i.

"O," thuirt is', "thig staigh don a' lios, thig staigh," thuirt i 's, "gheobh thu [...] <sup>1</sup> mac a' rìgh."

"Och," thuirt e, "chan urra dhomh-as dhol faisg air gin. Tha mi 'na mo bheothach fiadhaich, le seo air m'amhaich."

"Och, cum, cum sin, cum-- thig thu staigh," thuirt i.

Chaidh e sin staigh 's bha e ag ith' na h-ubhail 's, *pear*, 's rudan a's a', air na craobhan a's a' lios.

'S thàinig a' sin a' bhean mach, a' bhean bha an Loch Lèug, thuirt i, "O, thig staigh," thuirt i.

"O," thuirt e, "cha tèid mi staigh. Nach eil thu 'faicinn dè a th'orm-as?"

"O, tha," thuirt a' bhean ris, "tha mi 'faicinn dè a th'ort."

'S bha dà mhac aig a' bhean sin, an tè bha an Loch Leug. Dithis mhic aic'.

"Thig thu a-staigh," thuirt i, "am faic mi dè nì mi riut-sa."

'S thug i leis a' chail' aice fhèin, a' chaileag aice fhèin, 's chuir i suidh' mu choinneimh a' bhalaich i air taobh eil' an tein'. 'S thug e (*sic*), eh, 'broilleach a rùisg' bhàn gu, gu, gu 'meadhan.

Thuirt i ris a' chaileag, "Dè<sup>2</sup> -- an cailleadh thu làimh, gaoirdean air a shon?"

"Caillidh."

"An cailleadh thu broilleach air a shon?"

"Caillidh."

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<sup>1</sup>Here the phrasing is very unclear; my best guess is "*gheobh thu as fheàrr tha dleasdaicht' dhu*" ("you'll get the best that is owed to you").

<sup>2</sup>Here C.Z. says "This just turned itself off" in reference to the camcorder. B.S. seems to take no heed and continues with the story.

C.Z.: Mmm hmm.

B.S.: O, chailleadh i a beatha airson a' balach.

"O, ma tha," thuirt is', bha i rùisg' bhàn gu ... gu 'meadhon. 'S bha es' a' suidh' air, air an taobh eil', 'balach 'na shuidh', 'gill 'na shuidh' air an taobh eil', m'a coinneimh, 's am beoth[ach]. Thug i glaodh ri ... thug a' bhean bha an Loch Lèug, thug i glaodh ri 'cuid fhèin mic.

"Ruithi' mach," thuirt i, " 's thoiribh staigh dhomh am mult as raimhre a gheobh si'. Agus thoiribh dhomh-as an fheòil aig' ann a' seo. A-staigh seo."

O sin d'rinn iad, mharbh iad a' mult 's. 'S thug iad an fheòil staigh 's chuir i air a' *frying pan* e, 's bha i 'tionndain seo 's, o bha am beothach seo, chuir i car dith fhèin. 'S chuir i car, 's thug i car ás (*sic*), thug car gu-- leum i dhan a' pha-- *frying pan*. 'S dar a thàinig i a's a' *frying pan* -- o'n a bha e ro theth dhith-eas -- thug i leum 's char i air ais air broilleach 'chail'. Thog a' bhean bha [an] Loch Leug a' cliobhar aic', 's gheàrr i am broilleach sin dhith, bhon a' chaileag.

'S [...] e sgud air an ùrlar, 's thug i mias air 's chuir i -- thug i 'mias [air] 's chuir i 'cas air. 'S leig i leis airson treis. An sin, thog i e, 's bha a' lèin' ann a' sin rithisti' mar fhuair e.

"Shin agad," thuirt i, " 'm prèasant agad. Tha i ann a' sin mar fhuair thus' i," thuirt i.

"O, ma tha," thuirt a' balach, "cuir a's a' tein' i."

Thilg i 'lèin' a's a' tein' 's, rinn i aon urchair 's char i mach an t-simileir.

Nis. Cailleach nan Cearc ann a' sin, 's bha mac aic'-eas cuideachd. Agus, bha Cailleach nan Cearc, bha i -- 's i bha 'sealltainn as dèidh a' chail'. Bhiodh i 'cìreadh i, 's 'ga glanadh 's 'cur a falt an òrdugh.

'S thuirt i ri a mac -- Cailleach nan Cearc, thuirt i ri a mac: "Ha," thuirt i, "nam biodh thus' glic," thuirt i, "*clever*, dh'fhaodadh an t-oigh-- 'n t-oighreachd seo bhith agad fhèin."

"Ciamar ... bhiodh sin agam-as?" thuirt e.

"Ah, uill," thuirt i sin, " 'se mis' tha 'sealltainn as dèidh a' chail'," thuirt i, "agus innsidh mis' rudeigin dhut, b'urra' dhut--'s 'g ràdh ris gu' robh thu cuide ris a' bhean aig' a' raoir."

"O," thuirt e [...].

"Tha cìr òir aic'," thuirt i, " 's tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic' 's. 'S ma dh'innseas thu sin na rudan dha-as ... [*pause*] gheobh thus'-- 'se thus' a bhios ann a' sin, 'se thus' a bhios a's an oighreachd, 's bhios es' air chur mach.

'S dh'innis e seo dha, dhan a', dhan a' ghill'. 'S char a' gill' an àird staigh gus a' bhean aig'. 'S thuirt e seo rith', 's char iad mach air a' chèil' 's, thuirt es' gu' robh e a' folbh. 'S dh'fholbh is', thilg e bhàn staighr' i. 'S dh'fholbh e. [*Pause*.]

"Mas mar sin a tha thu," thuirt e rith' -- "bi thu 'dol cuide ris, ma tha, cha bhi thu cuide rium-as."

Làrn'-màireach, dh'fholbh e.

'S bha e 'dol 's bha e 'dol 's, gus bha e [...] 's, bha e 'dol throimh choill'. 'S chual' e glaoth, sheall e. 'S bha duin' ann a' sin, duin'.

'S char a' ghille far a' robh e seo, "Dè a th'ort?" thuirt e.

"O," thuirt e, "tha stad uisg' orm. [*Pause.*] Tha [an cnàmh]<sup>3</sup> orm," thuirt e. "Ach, tha fuaran ann a' sin," thuirt e, "ach tha e an dràsdaì," thuirt e, "air a gheardaich' le beothaichean fiadhaich. Tha leòghann," thuirt e, " 's tha, tha a' cuach aig a' leòghann 'na dhòrn. Nam faighinn-eas deoch á sin," thuirt e, "bhithinn gu math. Ach tha iad 'n dràsda' 'nan cadal," thuirt e, " 's mas urra dhu-'s' fholbh," thuirt e, " 's sin thoir' a' -- bheir thu a' cuach, 'chuach aig', á spog a' leòghainn, tha *command* an t-saoghail agad-sa."

Chaidh a' gill, 's chunnaic es' e 's thug e spionadh oirre.

"Nis," thuirt a' duin' bha goirt ris, "deoch 'sa' bith dh'iarras thu, gheobh thu a's a' chuach e."

Fhuair e deoch 's bha -- nis an duin', dh'èirich e 's bha e cho math 's a bha e riamh.

"Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "tha a-nis *command* 'n t-saoghail a'ad, àit' 'sam bith bios thu ag iarraidh dhol, bios thu ann ann a', ann a' priob," thuirt e.

"Uill, tha mi ag iarraidh," thuirt e, "dhol air ais," thuirt e, "gu ... Eilean Loch Lèug."

Bha e air ais mar sin. Agus dar char e air ais, 'se fear-ciùil-- cèol a bh'ann. 'S thàinig e 's bha a' bhean aig', a' bhean a bh'aig', bha i air a' leabaidh. 'S bha i gu tinn bho dh'fholbh es', gus an oidhch' sin. 'S an oidhch' sin dh'èirich i, 's bha i 'na suidh' air a', air an -- h-uilinn a's a' leabaidh. 'S char a bràthair 'na ruith.

Thuirt is' nis ris, "Dè dhèanadh thu nam b'e 'duin' agam a thàinig? Nan tigeadh e?"

"O, dè dhèana' mi ri'?" thuirt e, "[na] dèan'-as air," thuirt e, "dhèan'-as air," thuirt e, " 'se sgud' an ceann deth leis a' chlaidheamh, thoir an ceann deth."

Ach thàinig an sin [*BS.. makes a knocking sound with his hand on the table*] a' bràthair bu shin' dhith. 'S bha i -- dh'innis i a' stòiridh dha, dè dhèanadh i (*sic*), dè dhèanadh e dhan a' ghille, dhan, dhan duin' aic', thàinig e air ais.

"Och," thuirt e, "cha dèan'-as dad air." Thuirt e, " 'Se na breugan char a dh'innis dha fhèin," thuirt e, "cha dèan'-as dad air," thuirt e. "Cuin' a bha thus' an àird 'na do shuidh' air a' leabaidh, roimhe?" thuirt e.

"Uill," thuirt i, "sìod a'ad e. Am fear tha 'dèanamh a' cheòl ann a' sin, shin agad e," thuirt i, "thàinig e."

Agus, thàinig an gill' agus fhuair e a' bhean aig', 's thug e ... a' boirionnach, bha -- a' bhean a bha an Loch Lèug, [thuirt] na breugan, agus thuirt e ris, "An rud chaidh a dhèanamh orm-as," thuirt e.

"Ach," thuirt i, "leig seachad e."

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<sup>3</sup>"*an cnàmh*": "the digestion". Perhaps it is meant that the sick man is suffering from some sort of digestive illness; "*cnàmhadh*," meaning "decaying, consuming," may be another possibility here.



'S bha e fhèin 's a' bhean aig' cho toilichit' 's a bha aid riamh ann a' sin, air an oighreachd aig a', aig a' bhean bha [an] Loch Leùg.

**C.Z.:** Sin agad e.

**B.S.:** Sin an ceann aic'.

## AM MARAICHE MÀIRNEAL

**Date:** 18 September 1995

**Collector:** Carol Zall

Uill, tha mi 'dol a-nis a dh'inns' Stòiridh a' Mharaich' Mhàirneal dhuibh. Stòiridh a' Mharaich', agus eh, 'se mac rìgh bh'ann. 'S bha a' rìgh, bha e pòsd' an darn' triob. Bha e pòsda, bha dà bhean aig'. Agus, eh. Aon de na lathaichean, fhuair eh ... mac a' rìgh, fhuair e fios gu' robh a leas-mhàthair 'g iarraidh fhaicinn.

Dh'innis e seo, "O," thuirt 'athair ris, "carson nach deach thu ann, deach thu a shealltainn air, air, air, air do leas-mhàthair?"

O, ruig e an t-àit 's, thog i staigh e 's, thuirt i ris gu' robh i 'dol a thoir dha prèasant.

"Ah, uill," thuirt e, "cha tug mis' riamh prèasant dhuibh fhèin."

"Och uill," thuirt i, "gheobh thus' -- bheir mis' dhut-sa," thuirt i.

'S thug i dha lèin'. Thug i -- sheall a' balach air a' lèin', 's, "O," thuirt e, bha a' lèin' brèagha. Chuir e a' lèin' air, cha robh i fad' air dar a dh'fhairich e 'curlaigeadh e, rudeigin 'curlaig' mun cuairt air. 'S churlaig i 's churl' i, gus an tàinig i thairis air a ghualann 's, chaidh i mun cuairt air amhaich air.

Thàinig e sin air ais gu àit 'athar, an oighreachd ['athar], aig a' rìgh.

"Shin a'ad," thuirt e, thuirt e, thuirt e ri ... 'athair. "Shin agai' 'm prèasant thug a' leas-- mo leas-mhàthair dhomh."

"O an e sin 'm prèasant a thug i dhu?' [Uill]," thuirt e, "thug e (*sic*) prèasant bhrèagha dhut." Thuirt e, "Chuir e (*sic*) nathair air d'amhaich."

'S nis [] lathaichean sin, bhiodh ... seann bhoirionnach ac', bhiodh 'dèanamh 'sealltainn ris na cearcan 's -- cearcan 's rudan 's.

Thuirt a' rìgh ris, "Ruith gu Cailleach nan Cearc. Inns' is' dhut dè nì thu. Tha fiosrach' aic'-eas. Inns' is' dhut."

Char e far a' robh i 's dh'innis e, "O," thuirt i, "chan eil fhios agam-as. Chan eil gin a' seo a nì feum dhut ach aon bhoirionnach, 's tha i am bàrr Eilean Loch Lèug."

" 'S ciamar gheobh mi a' sin?" thuirt e.

"O," thuirt i, "cha ... feumas am Maraiche Màirneil<sup>1</sup> thoir ann leis a' bhàt' aig' thu."

'Se seo a bh'ann, char e sin gus a' Mha-- Mharaich'. 'S bha am Maraich', bha e air leabaidh, cha robh e gu math. Dh'innis e dha.

"O," thuirt am Maraich' ris nis, "Gheobh thu bàt'," thuirt e, "thoir a' lèin' a's a' bhàt."

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<sup>1</sup>Here B.S. pronounces the name of the *Maraiche Màirneal* in a slightly different manner than usual.

Ach char aid ris a' bhàt, 's bha aid 'dol [gus an eilean], 'cur mach air a' mhuir i. Cha glu-- cha b'urr' dhoi' 'm bàt' a ghluas'.

Char e air ais rithist gus a' Mharaich', 's thuirt e, "O," thuirt e, "cha dean *stem* dheth -- *stem* dhen a' bhàt ghluas'. Cha b'urra dhui' cur mach air an uisg'.

"Och, uill, uill," thuirt am Maraich', "thoir dhomh mo thrùsair."

Chuir e a thrùsair air 's, char e cuide ris.

"Cuir mo ghualann ris a', ri cuinnlean a' bhàt'."

Chuir e a ghulann ri cuinnlean a' bhàt, 's thug e aon [*heave*] oirr' 's, chuir e mach trì fad fhèin air flod i.

"Nis," thuirt e, "ruith staigh oirr' nis."

Char iad nis staigh air a' bhàt, 's [chaidh a' balach ...].

Bha, a' bhean bha an Loch Leùg, bha i 'sealltainn 's, "Uill," thuirt i, "cha chreid mi nach e sin bàrr cruinn soitheach a' Mharaiche Mhàirneal a' tighinn aon uair fhathastaich. Bheil fhios gu dè an *cargo* a th'aig' a' dràsdaich?"

"O," thuirt e rith', thug i glaoth ris, "dè an *cargo* a th'a'ad 'n dràsdaich, a Mharaich'?"

"*Cargo* nach robh riamh roimhe agam."

Thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Ruith thus'," thuirt e, "agus thoir a-staigh dà pheil a dh'uisg' *fresh*, bios againn 'dol air ais."

Char am balach mach 's bha lios ac', aig a' taigh aig a' bhean Eilean Loch Leùg. 'S bha balla 's bha -- bha e, chaidh a' sin a' balach 's bha 'balach 'g ith' na measan a's a', taobh mach a' bhall'.

'S thàinig a' chail' bha seo mach 's, thuirt i ris, "O," thuirt i, "thig staigh, thig staigh dhan a' lios, thig staigh dhan a' lios. [...], thig staigh."

"Chan urr' dhomh-as dhol staigh," thuirt e. "Tha mi 'na mo bheothach fiadhach."

'S dar bha e ag [ithe], bha e 'toir' aon 'na bheul fhèin 's bha e 'cur am beul, aon am beul a' nathair.

Thàinig a' chail' staigh 's thuirt i ri 'màthair, "O," thuirt i, "chunna mi gille an sin," thuirt i, " 's chan fhac' mi balach riamh nas brèaghai' na e. 'S cha bhì mis' ... beò mura fhaigh mi e."

"O, nach bì?" thuirt a mathair rith'. "Dè nì thu air a shon, an caill thu an gaoirdean air a shon?"

"Caillidh."

"An caill thu am broilleach air a shon?"

"Caillidh."

"Uill, uill, thoir staigh e," thuirt i.

Thug i sin glaoth [air dhol] staigh --

"O cha tèid, cha tèid," thuirt e, "cha tèid mi staigh," thuirt e.

"Thig staigh," thuirt i ris.

Thàinig e staigh 's, sheall a' ... màthair na cail' es'.

"Cò thug -- ?" thuirt i.

"Thug," thuirt e, "mo leas-mhàthair."

"O," thuirt i, "thug i, thug i prèasant brèagha dhut, do leas-mhàthair."

" 'M b'urr' dhu' dad a dhèanamh?"

"O," thuirt i, "chan fheudar nach dèan."

Bha triùir mac-- mic aig a', aig a' bhean, 's thug i glaodh orr'.

"Ruith agus," thuirt i, "faigh ... marbhaibh 'm mult as raimhre a gheobh si', 's thoiribh an fheòil a-staigh dhomh-as."

Chaidh na gillean mach 's mharbh aid am beòthach sin. Thud iad an fheòil staigh dhan a' bhean, 's chuir i a' *frying pan* air an tein'. 'S chuir i a' chail 'na suidh' mar a tha thus' 'n dràsdaich, no mar tha thus' an dràsdaì', agus mis' ann a' seo.<sup>2</sup> 'S rùisg i bhàn i, gu ... bhàn ... gu 'mheadhon gu far a' robh 'cruachann. Rùisg i a' broilleach bhàn.

'S gheàrr i an àird an fheòil 's chuir i, air a', air a', air a' phan i, 's bha i 'ga tionnda'<sup>3</sup> 's 'ga tionnda' 's 'ga tionndain. 'S chuir a' beòthach car dheth fhèin. Rinn i car dith. 'S chuir i car 's chuir i car 's chuir i car. 'S aon de na caran leum i null 's, char i air -- air broillichean a' chail'. 'S thug a màthair an cliobhar 's, sgud i am broilleach dhith. 'S thug i -- thuit i air an ùrlar 's [*here B.S. makes a stomping sound with his foot to illustrate the action of the story*] chuir i mias 's chuir i 'cas air, mias thairis oirr' 's, chuir i cas air. [*Pause.*] Sin thog i a' mhias [...] 's dar a thog i a' mhias bha a' lèin' 'n sin --

"Sin a'ad," thuirt i, ris a' bhalach, "do lèin'. Tha i mar bha i." Thilg i a's an tein' i. "Shin a'ad," thuirt i, "[cuireas 'san tein' i 's]."

Rinn a' lein' aon urchair 's, dar a [...] loisg a's an tein' i.

'S, eh, nis, bha Cailleach nan Cearc ann a' sin cuideachd. 'S bha mac aic'-eas, cuideachd.

'S thuirt i ri a mac, "Ach," thuirt i ris, "amadan, nan robh thus' gli-- glic, dh'fhaodadh an oighreachd seo a bhith agad fhèin."

"Ciamar tha e gu bhith agam-as?"

"O, bhiodh," thuirt i. "Tha fhios agam-as air a' bhean," thuirt i. "Tha mi ... 'ga cìreadh 's 'g obair oirr' na h-uile latha. Tha cìr òir aic'," thuirt i, "airson a' cìreadh a ceann, 's tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic'. 'S innis thu sin dha-as," thuirt is, "agus cuireas<sup>4</sup> iad mach air a chèil', 's gheobh-- bios an t-àit' agad-as."

<sup>2</sup>"*S chuir i a' chail 'na suidh' mar a tha thus' 'n dràsdaich, no mar tha thus' an dràsdaì', agus mis' ann a' seo*" ("And she seated the girl like you are now, or like you now, and me over here"): here Brian gestures towards his listeners who are seated facing him while he describes how the boy and girl were seated in the story.

<sup>3</sup>"*tionnda*": for "*tionndain*" ("turning").

<sup>4</sup>Here I believe that "*cuireas*" should be understood with a following "*thu*" or "*sin*" so that the sentence would read "*agus cuireas thu/sin iad mach air a chèil*": "and you/that will cause them to fall out" (i.e., disagree with one another).

Thuirte ... thuirte a', Cailleach nan Cearc ri a mac fhèin, sin a dh'inns' dhan a', dhan duin'.

'S aon de na lathaichean bha iad mach 's, bha an dithis bhalaich cuideachd 's thuirte e ris an fhear eil', thuirte a' fear ... "Tha bean bhrèagha agad."

"O," thuirte e, "tha bean bhrèagha a'am."

"Uill, ma tha i cho brèagha sin," thuirte e, "an innis mis' dhut e. Tha cea-- tha cìr òir aic', òir aic', airson a bhith 'cìreadh 'ceann, 's tha ceann òir air a' bhroilleach aic'."

"Ciamar tha fhios agad-s' air sin?"

"O tha fhios agam," thuirte e, "bha mis' a's a' leabaidh cuide rith'."

Char e an àird staigh 's, thuirte e rith'-eas', "èirich a-mach à seo," thuirte es', "gobh a' rathad."

Thuirte e, "Cha bhi thu oidhch' tuillidh cuide rium-as."

Dh'fholbh -- chan e a-nis, dh'fholbh es' a-nis, cuideachd, leis an [...], thog es' 's dh'fholbh e. 'S bha a' chail', bha i glè thinn, 's ghobh i a' leabaidh, leis an tàmailt a bh'oirr'. 'S cha, cha robh i gu math idir.

Agus, eh, aon de na lathaichean, dar bha 'n duin' air folbh, bha e 'dol throimh coill', 's chual', chual' e glaoth.

'S bha duin' ann a' sin 's, "Dè a th'ort?" thuirte e.

"O," thuirte e, "tha stad uisg' orm. Ach tha fuaran ann a' sin," thuirte e, "bhàn sin, ach tha e a' dràsdaì," thuirte e, "tha beothaichean fiadhaich mun cuairt air. Ach tha iad 'nan cadal an dràsdaich. 'S tha leòghann," thuirte e, " 's tha an Còrn Leathraich<sup>5</sup> aig' 'na dhòrn. Nam faighinn-eas deoch á sin," thuirte e, "bhithinn-s' cho math 's a bha mi roimhe."

"O, ma tha," thuirte e, an gill' ris, "gheobh -- gheobh mis' e."

"Uill," thuirte e, "ma thèid thu glè shocarach, agus spìon a' -- rug eh, air na dòrn -- eh, 'leòghainn," thuirte e.

Char e bhàn 's bha na beothaichean mun cuairt air an fhuaran, bha 'leòghann 's bha [... seo aig a' lòn]. Rug e 's thug e bhuaith a' chuach.

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<sup>5</sup>"An Còrn Leathraich": "The Leather (?) Horn". This name is given to magical wishing horns or cups in some of Brian's stories. The magic wishing cup not only appears in Brian's other versions of *Am Maraiche Màirneal* (but is not given a name), but also in Brian's 1958 version of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*, when the hero is sent to the Isle of the Big Men for the *Còrn Leathraich*. Ailidh Dall also uses the term in his version of *Stòiridh Ladhair*, in which the hero must obtain the *Còrn Leathraich* on one of his quests (SA 1957/36 & 37); Ailidh's daughter, Mary Stewart, uses the term in her version of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* (SA 1957/48/A4 & B1). In some versions of *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn* from outwith the Stewart family, the wishing cup is called the *Còrn* or *Cupan Ceathraich*, which James MacDougall glosses as a "four-sided" cup or horn (1891: 267; here he also provides some additional notes on aspects of magical cups in Gaelic stories which may be of interest). While the words "*leathraich*" and "*ceathraich*" are clearly similar, I have listened carefully to the Stewart family recordings and have concluded that Brian, Ailidh Dall and Mary all say "*leathraich*" in their recordings. While this could possibly mean the "leather" or "hide" cup or horn, there is still the question of the relationship between the terms "*leathraich*" and "*ceathraich*": the similarity between them is obvious, but without further research into the question I could not venture a guess as to the relationship between these terms.



Fhuair an duin' deoch 's, "O, a-nis," thuirt 'duin', "[bidh] mi ceart gu leòr nis," thuirt e. "Tha *command* 'n t-saoghail agad-as, "a's a' t-soitheach sin. Ait' 'sam bith bhios thu ag iarraidh dhol, tha thu ann dìreach," thuirt e, "am priobadh na sùil."

"O, uill," thuirt e, " 's math sin," thuirt e, 's thuirt a'--

"Inns'," thuirt e, "can nis ris a' t-soitheach, gu' beil thu 'g iarraidh dhol an sin."

Thuirt am balach ris, ris an t-soitheach, "Tha mi ag iarraidh dhol an dràs'," thuirt e, "gu ... Eilean Loch Lèug."

Bha e ag iarraidh air ais gus a' bhean. Agus dar a char e air ais, 'se fear-ceòl a bh'ann. Bha ciùil (*sic*) aig'. Thàinig e an oidhch' seo, air an oidhch' thàinig e. Agus, thàinig am bràthair bu-- bràthair, bha triùir bhràithrean aig a' chail', thàinig am bràthair bu h-òig' dhith, thàinig e [...].

Thuirt i, "Dè theireadh, dè dhèanadh thu, nàn tigeadh a' duin' agam air ais?"

"O, dè dhèan'," thuirt e, "gheàrrainn 'n ceann deth leis a' chladheamh."

'S thàinig a' sin ... am bràthair bu shin', 's thuirt i ris-sa', dè dhèanadh e.

"O," thuirt e, "dè dhèan'-as air? Cha dèan'-as dad air. 'Se an fhoill chaidh dhèanamh air fhèin, 'se na breugan chaidh a -- chaidh a -- inns' dha 's, [an fhoill char ... cha robh 'n còir aige-san].<sup>6</sup> Agus am fear a lot, 'se a leighis. Cuin' a bha thus' 'na do shuidh' a's a' leabaidh bho dheireadh?"

'Se es' agus a' ceòl a dh'èirich i.

"O, ma tha," thuirt is' ris, "siod e, thàinig e nochd, a' fear bha 'na fhear-ciùil."

'S char i sin ... an duin' agus a' bhean cuideachd. 'S dh'fhaodadh gu' bheil iad am bàrr Eilean Loch Lèug fhathast, chan eil fhios agam-as. Ach tha aid cho toilichit 's a bha iad [roimhe] 's, cha robh an còrr mu dheidhinn rudan eil'. 'S bha iad riamh toilichit an dèidh sin. *Happy ever after*.

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<sup>6</sup>"*cha robh 'n còir aige-san*": "he did not have the right/claim/authority". Here Brian is possibly referring to a detail of the story not actually narrated in this telling, but which occurs in his uncle Ailidh's version: the hero makes a bet with the hen-wife's son that his wife is good, and loses the wager when the hen-wife's son states that the hero's wife has a gold nipple (thus implying that she has been unfaithful). As the later section of the story in which the "*cha robh 'n còir aige-san*" phrase occurs involves set dialogue ("*se am fear a lot, 'se a leighis*" and "*'se an fhoill chaidh dhèanamh air*" -- both phrases which also occur in Ailidh Dall's version) it is possible that the "*cha robh 'n còir aige-san*" phrase may be an echo of remembered wording which alludes to a detail of the story which Brian has not remembered, or simply has not told. This would be a similar situation to that of Brian's versions of *Am Bodach Baigeir* in which he preserves the detail of a missing finger-tip which is used to identify the hero at the end of the story, without actually telling the incident of how the hero's finger-tip is lost. See the section on "Further Implications of Logical Links" in Chapter Four for more discussion of how such links may give clues to different forms of a story.

OISEAN AS DÈIDH NA FÈINN'

**Date:** 1958

**Collector:** Hamish Henderson

**School of Scottish Studies Recording SA 1958/72/A13 & B1**

**H.H.:** Am bheil sgeul agad, Alasdair, air Oisean an dèidh na Fèinne?

**B.S.:** O, Stòiridh Oisean.<sup>1</sup>

**H.H.:** Tha.

**B.S.:** Tha, cha chreid mi nach tèid mi, cho fad agus is aithn' dhomh i.

**H.H.:** Suas, ma ta.

**B.S.:** 'S urr' mi.<sup>2</sup> Uill, 'se bh'ann trì bràithrean, Oisean, agus a dhà bhràthair. 'S bha aid ann am bothan àiridh, bothanan ac'.

**H.H.:** 'Seadh.

**B.S.:** 'S thàinig oidhch' stoirmeil 's, bha aid staigh 'sna bothan' ac' 's thàinig feannag, gus an doras aig aon de na bràithrean aig Oisean. Ghnog i aig an doras agus, dh'fhoighnich is' am faigheadh i cairtealan na h-oidhche bhuaith'.

'S thuirt e rith', "Ruith a-mach á seo," ars es', "na cuiridh mi an ceann diot le mo chorrage."

Ach chaidh i a' sin gus an darna bràthair, agus dh'fhoighnich i, am faigheadh i cairteal' na h-oidhche bhuaith'. Thuirt es' an aon rud rith'.

"Ruith a-mach," ars es', "na cuiridh mi an ceann diot le mo chorrage."

Ach, thàinig i sin gu taigh, gus a' bhothan aig Oisean. 'S dh'fhoighnich i, 's dh'fhoighnich i, am faigheadh i bhith cuide ris airson an oidhch'. Thug Oisean sùil oirr'-s'.

"Och, uill," thuirt e, "chan fhaic mi gu dè an dolaidh nì thus' [airson] a bhith ann na h-oidh[ch]', thig a-staigh," thuirt e rith'.

Thàinig iad sin staigh 's, thug e dhith cathair. "Bi suidh'." Agus, thàinig nis an àm, a' sùipeir.

"Och, ma tha," thuirt i ri Oisean, "[...], bheir thu nis -- [an toir] thu dhomh mo shùipeir?"

"O," thuirt Oisean, "bheir." Fhuair i sin a sùipeir. Thàinig t-sin 'tìd' dhol, do laigh', do chadal. Agus, char Oisean laigh'.

"Nis," thuirt i ri Oisean, "bhon a rinn sinn comann biadh, carson nach dèanadh sinn comann leabaidh?"

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<sup>1</sup>Here Brian does not slenderise "*Oisean*" indicate the genitive, hence the spelling. According to Nancy Dorian (1978: 84-85), the "palatalized genitive singular survives only vestigially in attributive noun constructions" in East Sutherland Gaelic; this is generally true of Brian's Gaelic as well.

<sup>2</sup>This phrase '*S urr' mi*' is a continuation of Brian's thought from his previous sentence, as in, "Yes, I'll go as far as I know it ... [as far as] I can."

"Och," thuirt Oisean rith', "thig a-staigh air mo chùlaibh."

Thàinig i sin a-staigh air cùlaibh Oisean 's, ach a's a' mhadainn, dar a dhùisg e, mochthrath, thug e sùil an taice ris. 'S an taice ris an fheannag dhubh thàinig staigh an oidhch' roimhne sin, 'se a bh'aig' boirionnach, cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e riamh. Agus, thug e sin sùil oirr'-s', thuirt e rith' seo, labhair e seo rith'.

Thuirt es', "An thus' an fheannag thàinig staigh?"

" 'S mì," ars is', "ach tha mise fo gheasan. Agus mur b'e 's gu' tug thu staigh raoir mí, bhiodh mis' 'nam fheannag fhathastaich. 'S bidh mis' 'na mo bhean agad cho fad' 's a bhios thu beò, mur a' tilg thu a' riochd a's an tàinig mi a-staigh orm. Ach ma thilgeas thus' riochd na feannag orm, folbhaidh mis' a-rithistich 'nam fheannag, mar a thàinig [mì]."

"Uill, uill," thuirt Oisean, "bidh sin ceart gu leòr. Cha thilg [sinn] sin ort." Bha a-nis Oisean, e-fhèin 's a bhràithrean, bha aid a's a' bheinn 's, aig an Fhèinneach,<sup>3</sup> 'sealg na h-uil' lath', gus an tàinig tìd' gall' a bh'aig', gu' robh cuileanan gu bhith aic'.

'S dar a bha iad dol a-mach a' madainn bha seo, thuirt Oisean rith', "O," thuirt e, "bios cuileanan aig a' ghall tha sin 'n diugh, agus cuimhnich," ars es', "gu, eh, gun cuir thu streang air a' chiad cuilean. Agus," thuirt es', "thig duin', thig duin', dar a bhios na cuileanan aig a' ghall, agus bios e ag iarraidh a' chiad cuilean. Ach dè 'sam bith nì thu, na toir dha a' chiad cuilean."

"O cha toir," thuirt a' bhean.

Thog e — Oisean a' bheinn shin, mar a b'àbhaist dha bhith, e fhèin 's a chuid bhràithrean 's. Thàinig iad staigh anmoch, agus, eh, thuirt e, "O, do rug càil?"

"Rug," ars is', ars a' bhean.

Thuirt es', "Thoir suas a' chiad cuilean."

Agus. Char is' a thoir suas a' chiad cuilean 's. Rug e air a' chluais air 's, chrath e e. 'S rinn a' cuilean sg-- sgread ás.

"Och," thuirt es', "cha robh thu a-nis ach tarraing asam. Thoir suas a' chiad cuilean," thuirt e, "gum faic mì e."

Ach thog i sin suas an darna fear, 's rug e air a' chluais air 's thug e crath dha.

"O," ars es', "chan e sin e."

Ach a dh'innis i sin dha, "O," thuirt is', "thàinig an duin', bha thu ag ràdh, agus bha agam-as a' chiad cuilean a thoir dha. Chan fholbhadh e, 's bha e 'dol 'ga, 'dol a thoir a' cheann (*sic*)

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<sup>3</sup>"Fèinneach": this word occurs in both *Stòiridh Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn* and *Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn*. It seems to be a collective form used to denote the *Fèinn* (Fionn's war band). Brian's pronunciation of the word is somewhat unstable, varying between *Fèinndibh* (with the *-ibh* ending pronounced /oo/, as is common in Sutherland) and *Fèinneach*. I have followed Brian's speech in the transcription, so that where the */chl/* ending is clearly audible, I have written it as *Fèinneach*; otherwise it appears as *Fèinndibh*. The medial double 'n' is highly nasalised, but I have retained it in the spelling to make the connection with the *Fèinn* clear. Similarly the ending in */-ibh/* is used to indicate a possible dative plural origin.

dhiom, mura toirinn-eas dha a' chiad cuilean. Agus le gu' do shabhail-- gun sàbhail' mi mo bheatha bhuaith', thug mis' dha a' chiad cuilean.

"Ahhh," thuirt Oisean, "fheannag ghràinnd,<sup>4</sup> bha fhios a'm gun dèanadh thu seo."

'S cho luath agus a thuirt e sin rith', [sound of a hand slap for rhythmic emphasis] dh'fholbh is' 'na feannag, mach air an doras. Dar a chunnaic Oisean sin nis, ghobh e sin 'n aithreachas, 's ghobh e as a deaghaidh. 'S lean e i, airson iomadach bliadhn' as a deaghaidh, ach mu dheireadh thall, thàinig a' fheannag air ais far a' robh e, 's thuirt i ris:

"Nis, Oisean," thuirt i, "chan urra' dhomh-as dhol air ais gu brathach cuide riut. Uill dh'innis mis' dhut, dar a thàinig mi staigh, an da madainn, na tilg a' riochd orm-as a's a' tàinig mi staigh, nach b'urr' dhomh-as fuireach cuide riut. 'S chan urra' dhomh nis fuireach cuide riut gu brathach. Ach ruith thus' air ais, agus seo a'd fàinn' dhut." Thug i fàinne 'na spòg aic', 's thug i dha Oisean e. "Cuir sin," thuirt i, "air do làimh, [] do chorrach, agus cho fad agus a bhios a' fàinne sin air do chorrach, bios thu beò. Ach ma chailleas thu e, thig a' bàs glè aithghearr ort."

Ach thill sin Oisean air ais, 's dh'fhàs e dall, 's dh'fhàs e bodhar. 'S bha e 'tighinn 's dar a thàinig e air ais gus an t-àit' a's a' robh na bothanan àirigh, cha robh iad ann. Cha robh gin dhiubh beò 's, dhe a chuid bràithrean. Ach bha fear eil' ann, ris an canadh aid Para Naona Cleireach.<sup>5</sup> 'S thug e sùil mach air an uinneag, 's chunnaic e Oisean.

'S thuirt e ris a' bhean aig', 's ris a' chloinn', "Uill," thuirt e, "tha mise meallt', mur h-e sin Oisean, 'tighinn aon uair fhathast. Sin a'ad e," thuirt e, " 's, tha e glè lag."

Bha e 'tuiteam 's 'g èiridh.

Thuirt e ris a' bhean, "Ruith staigh," thuirt e ris a' bhean, "agus dèan -- fuin bonnach, agus fuin a' *griddle*<sup>6</sup> ann, cuir a' *ghriddle* a's a' bhonnach."

Ach thàinig Oisi-- Oisean staigh 's, thug aid dha cathair 's, rinn e suidhe. Agus, eh, thug aid dha biadh, 's thug aid dha a' bonnach bha seo, agus a' *griddle* innt' (*sic*). 'S dh'ith Oisean am bonnach, agus a' *griddle*. Bha e ann a' sin cuide riuth' nis, bha e 'toir dha, bha e 'toir dha a

<sup>4</sup>"ghrainnd": pronounced somewhat like /greh-itch/; a form of "gràndda," "ugly".

<sup>5</sup>*Para Naona Cleireach*: this name appears to be related to St. Patrick (and indeed Patrick is to be expected in this story); however, Brian himself makes no connection between the character in the story and St. Patrick. His pronunciation of the name is somewhat unstable, mostly varying between *Para Naona Cleireach* and *Para Naon Cleireach*. For the sake of clarity, I have written the name as "*Para Naona Cleireach*" throughout; my guess is that the name derives from *Para Naomh Clèireach* ("Para Holy/Saintly Cleric"). I have not put a length mark over the 'e' in "*Cleireach*" as this vowel is consistently short in Brian's pronunciation of the name.

Interestingly, in a note summarising a nineteenth century Sutherland version, Campbell of Islay reports the same character's name as "Paul na nooi clerach," glossing it as "Paul of the nine clerks (whom I strongly suspect to be St. Patrick)" (J.F. Campbell 1890-3, vol. 2: 120). The "nooi" of the older version is reminiscent of the name in Brian's version; perhaps they are both corruptions of the word "*naomh*" ("saint").

<sup>6</sup>Here Patrick tells his wife (!) to bake the griddle (an iron cooking implement) right into the cake; the implication is that because Oisean is of such great strength and stature, he will eat the cake, griddle and all.



chuid stòiridhean mar a bha -- mar a b'urra dha, dha Para Naona, Naona Cleireach 's. Agus, bha e a' dèanamh leabhraichean deth, 's 'ga sgrìobhadh bhàn. Ach aon latha char es' mach dan a' mhòn', 's thàinig e staigh le fiadh aig', agus damh. Agus, chuir e air a' bhòrd e.

'S thuirt e ri Oisean, "Robh fiadh a-riamh a's, a's an Fhèinn' agad, Oisean, bha cho mòr sin?"

Bha Oisean 'na shuidh' air a' chathair, 's bha e dall, bodhar.

"Cuir air mo bhois e," thuirt e. Chuir e air a bhois e 's chothromaich e e, [stàn] agus an àird.

"Ahhh," thuirt Oisean ris, " 's minig uair a chunna mis' spàg isean a' lòn-dubh na bu thruime na e."

Agus a-nis, shin a ghobh e nis fearg -- farmad, agus, thug e na leabhraichean a sgrìobh e le Oisean, 's thilg e a's an tein' aid. Ach thàinig pairt dhen a' chloinn' 's bha iad 'toir leis na leabhraichean air ais às an tein' an fheadhainn a b'urra dhoibh. Agus, thuirt e ri Oisean gu' robh e breugach agus nach creideadh e facal dhe na bha e ag innse dha. Ach bha balach a's an taigh, cuide ris, uh, Para Naona, Naona Cleireach. Agus, aon madainn dh'èirich e 's -- Oisean -- 's chuir e air 'aodach. 'S thuirt e ris a' bhalach a bha seo, an tigeadh e cuide ris?

"Thìg," thuirt a' balach.

Ach chum iad rompa, 's thuirt e ris a' bhalach, bha e 'foighneachd dheth an dràs'd 's a-rithist dè a bha e 'faicinn. Bha a' balach 'ga innis dha, na, cruachan a bha e 'faicinn. Ach, bho dheireadh, thàinig e, thuirt a' balach gu' robh e 'faicinn coill'.

"O, ma tha," ars es', "dèan air a' choill'."

'S dar a thàinig iad faisg air a' choill' a bha seo, cha b'e coill' a bh'ann, 'se a bh'ann luachair. Agus, thuirt a' balach ris, " 'Se a th'ann luachair."

"O," thuirt e, "bha mi 'dèanamh dheth sin. Uill," thuirt es', "dèan thus' air a' luachair."

Rinn aid air a' luachair, agus, thuirt Oisean ris a' bhalach, "Bheil thu 'faicinn an tè as àird a th'ann dhiubh, tha i bhos cinn chàich."

"Tha," thuirt a' balach.

"Uill," thuirt es', "streap an àird air an tè sin, gus a' [dèan] thu gus a' bhàrr aig', 's thig a' bàrr leat."

Shreap 'm balach a' luachair gus an deach e gus a' bhàrr, 's dar a char e gus a' bhàrr, thug an cudthrom aig' am bàrr -- 'luachair -- leis. 'S dar a thàinig e leis, dar e thàinig a' ploc leis, thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Dè tha thu 'faicinn nis?"

"O," thuirt a' balach, "tha mis' faicinn coin ann a' seo," thuirt e, "cho brèagha agus a chunna mi riamh. Ahh," thuirt e, " 's tha aon tè bhuidhe," thuirt a' balach, "air a' mhullach, tè uamhraidh brèagha a th'innt'."

"O, leig mach i," ars es', "dh'fhaodadh gu' dean i an gnòthach. Biorach a' Bhuidheag Bhoichd, 'n cù bu mheas bha riamh a's an Fhèinn'."

Thàinig Biorach a' Bhuidheag mach agus, cha mhòr nach do dh'ith i e leis an toileachadh.

"Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "dean toll a's an talamh."



Rinn am balach toll dha fhèin.

Thuirte es', "Dean toll dha do cheann, gu' tèid thu bhàn, gus ruig thu na gualainean agad."

Rinn am balach toll, agus dar a rinn e an toll, thuirte e ris (*sic*) Oisean gu' robh e deis'.

"Ma tha," thuirte e, "cuir bhàn do cheann."

'S thug [] Oisean, thug e aon glaoth às ann a' sin, agus bha e cleas<sup>7</sup> tàirneach a's na creagan, 's a's na monaidhean.

Agus, thuirte e ris a' bhalach, "Tog do cheann."

"Ooo," thuirte a' bhalach, "chan urra' mi. Chan urr' dhomh-as-- tha mo cheann sgaint', chan urra' dhomh-as."

"O, tud," thuirte es', "tog do cheann."

Thog e 'cheann bho dheireadh 's, thuirte e ris, "Dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O," thuirte e, "tha mi 'faicinn fèidh ann a' shin," thuirte e, "cho mòr agus nach fhac' mis' riamh leithid."

"Ach," thuirte Oisean, "greigh lodan,<sup>8</sup> leig seachad iad."

**H.H.:** Stad mionaid.

[*Story continues on side B of reel.*]

**H.H.:** *Track B SA1958/72.*

**B.S.:** "Tog do cheann."

"O chan urra mi."

"Hud, tud, tud. Tog do cheann."

Ach bho dheireadh thog am balach a cheann, agus thuirte e ris gum fac e, dh'fhoighnich Oisean ris dè a bha e a' faicinn.

"O," thuirte e "tha mi 'faicinn fèidh, cho mòr 's nach fhac' mis' riamh dad as motha na iad."

"Och," thuirte Oisean, "greigh lodan, leig seachad iad. Cuir bhàn do cheann a-rithistich."

"O," thuirte a' bhalach, "ma chuireas mis' bhàn mo cheann an dràsdaich, cha thog mi gu bràthach e, sgàinidh mo cheann."

Agus, eh, dar a thàinig .... dar a rinn am balach seo a-nis, chuir e bhàn a cheann a-rithistich, agus thug Oisean an ath èigh às, 's thug e glaoth ris a' bhalach a cheann thogail.

"O," thuirte a' bhalach, "chan urra mi. Chan urra mi 'n dràsdaich a thogail."

"Hud, hud, o na bi mar sin 'dhuin'. Tog do cheann."

Thog a' bhalach a cheann 's.

Thuirte e ris, "Dè tha thu 'faicinn nis?"

"O, tha-- ma an fheadh--<sup>9</sup> a' chiad feadhainn mòr," thuirte am balach, "than an fheadhainn seo a dhà mhiad."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Here the word "*cleas*" is used idiomatically to mean "like"; "and it was like thunder" etc.

<sup>8</sup>"*greigh lodan*": a herd from marshy ground, i.e. deer from poor grazing ground, which would not be large enough for Oisean's purposes.

"Greigh lodan, leig seachad aid."

Leig e leo' bhith dol.

"Cuir bhàn rithist do cheann."

"O," thuirt a' balach, "ma chuireas mis' bhàn mo cheann 'n dràsdaich, cha thog mis' feasd' e."

"Och, 'dhuin', cuir bhàn do cheann."

Chuir e 'cheann a's an toll a-rithistich, gus an gualainn. 'S thug Oisean an ath èigh às. Agus ma bha a' chiad dà èigh mòr, 'se an tè seo bu mhoth'.

"Tog do cheann, nis," thuirt e.

"O," thuirt a' balach, "tha mo cheann-as 'sgàint'."

"Tog do cheann."

Thog e sin 'cheann. Sheall e.

"Uill," thuirt a' balach, "tha fèidh ann a' seo," thuirt e, "'s tha iad cho mòr ris na monaidhean fhèin.<sup>11</sup> 'S tha aon fear mòr, mòr," thuirt es', "air an toiseach ac'."

"Ach, uill," thuirt Oisean, "dh'fhaodadh gun dèanadh es' an gnothach. Leig às Biorach a' Bhuidheag," thuirt Oisean.

Leig e a-bhàn es', 's thug Oisean glaodh ris nis. "Do rug i air?"

"Rug," thuirt a' balach.

"Do leag i e?"

"Leag."

"Uill, uill, ma tha."

Thuirt e a-nis, "Thig a' bhalaich, gheobh thu e. Agus bheir thu leis e," thuirt e, "agus ròistear thu bhiadh<sup>12</sup> dhomh-as, a's a' ghrollach<sup>13</sup> aig' fhèin."

Char a' balach, 's fhuair e 'bhiadh, 's bheothaich e tein' nisd, teine mòr. Chuir e 'bhiadh a's a' ghrollach aig' fhèin 's, ròist e dha Oisean e. Agus dar a bha e 'toir dha e, Oisean, 'bhiadh, char a' balach a shealltainn an robh e deiseil gu leòr, 's thug e dìreach piocag bheag às, chuir e 'na bhial e. Agus, eh. Dh'ith Oisean dhe a bhiadh, ann a' sin, 's dar a dh'ith Oisean a bhiadh, bha Oisean 'faicinn, 's bha e cho làidir 's a bha e riamh.

"Nisd," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "bheil thu 'faicinn," ars es', "leus air an t-sùil agam?" ars e.

"Tha," thuirt a' balach, "ach dè rinn sin ort?"

"Uill," thuirt es', "nach tug thus' bideag às an fhiadh, dar a bha thu 'ga thoir dhomh?"

"O, thug," thuirt a' balach, "ach--"

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<sup>9</sup>Here the phrase is garbled, but the intention is clearly something such as "*ma bha a' chiad feadhainn mòr*" ("if the first ones were big").

<sup>10</sup>"*mhiad*": a form of "*meud*," size; here slenderised.

<sup>11</sup>Note that *monaidhean* can mean both "moors" and "mountains, hills"; here perhaps the comparison takes in both concepts, evoking the image of large expanses of moorland which rise up into hills.

<sup>12</sup>Here the lenited *bhiadh* perhaps indicate a preceding *de*; *de bhiadh* would thus mean "of food".

<sup>13</sup>I have written this as "*ghrollach*" to reflect Brian's pronunciation. A more standard spelling would be "*ghreallach*" ("intestines").

"Nach robh fios agam-as gu robh thu dol a dhèanamh— och, chan eil e gu diuthair," thuirt e. "Chan eil e gu diuthair. Agus nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "tha an t-acras ort fhèin. Agus, cuiridh sinn a-nis," thuirt e, "eh, gheobh sinn biadh dhut-as." Agus chaidh e sin 's fhuair e bogha saighead, 's char e bhàn da na craobhan beith' a bha sin 's, thog e a' saighead aig, 's leag e isean lon-dubh. 'S dar a leag e an t-isean, thug e dhan a' bhalach airson a h-ith' i. Char a' balach 's, thug e na [...] nis, agus. Ach mas tug e dha i uile, thug e dhith a' spàg, thug e dhith aon de na spàgan, na casan aic'. 'S thug e leis e.

"Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "bios gu leòr agad-s' ann a' sin," thuirt e.

Och, dh'ith a' balach nis dhen a' lon-dubh, gus a' robh e buidheach. Agus, bha iad nis 'tilltinn air ais dhachaidh.

"Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "cuireas thu 'n cù air ais, cuireas thu, fàgas Biorach a' Bhuidheag," thuirt es, "fon a' phloc air ais."

Char e sin, 's chuir e Biorach a' Bhuidheag air ais fon a' phloc, far an tug e. 'S rinn iad air ais dhachaidh [dheth], gus eh, Para Naona Cleireach, gus an taigh aig'. 'S thàinig e staigh, thàinig Oisean staigh 's bha spàg an t-isean lon-dubh aig'. 'S dar a thàinig e a-staigh thilg e spàg an isean air a' bhòrd, 's dar a chu-- thilg e a' spàg air a' bhòrd, dh'fholbh na ceithir casan bhon a' bhòrd le cuideam a' spàg.

"Nis," thuirt Oisean ri Para Naona Cleireach, " 'm breugaich thu a-nis mi?"

Sheall Para Naona Cleireach. "Och uill," thuirt es', "cha bhreugaich, agus tha mi glè dhuilich," thuirt es', "airson gu' do loisg mi do chuid leabhraichean, agus gu' tuirt mi rudan olc riut. Ach tha mi a' faicinn nis," thuirt es', "gu' beil spàg isean a' lon-truigh<sup>14</sup>— an lon-dubh nas truime na am fiadh a thug— mharbh mis'."

Bha e sin 'toir na leabhraichean a bh'aig a' chloinn' agus na bideagan a chum a' chloinn' dhiubh, bha e 'ga' toir bhuampa, agus 'gan cuir ann an àit' nas sabhail'.

Ach bho dheireadh dh'fhàs sin Oisean, dh'fhàs e dall 's, dh'fhàs e lag a-rithistich. Agus, thug a' balach mach a' latha seo e 's bha e 'ga nigh'. Agus thàinig, dar a thug e, thug e, dar a bha e 'ga nigh', thug e am fàinn' dhen a' chorrach aig', 's chuir e air chlach e. Agus, dar a chuir e air chlach e, thàinig feannag. Thug i am fàinn' 's dh'fholbh i leis. Agus dh'aithnich Oisean e-fhèin 'sa mhionaid gun robh a' bàs 'tighinn air. Agus chuir e 'làimh chùl amhaich a' bhalaich mar seo, agus "Chunnaic thus' rudan," thuirt e, "agus chan innis thus' gu bràthach a dhuin' eil' e." Agus [dhiong]<sup>15</sup> e an amhaich aig' 's bhris e 'amhaich. 'S thuit a' balach marbh. 'S thàinig Oisean staigh, 's rinn e suidh' air shèithear. 'S theirig Oisean ann a' sin a's an t-sèithear, cha robh e tiotan a's an t-sèithear dar a theirig e. Agus, chan eil fhios agam-as bheil

<sup>14</sup>B.S. seems to mistakenly say *truigh* here and then corrects himself.

<sup>15</sup>Here the spoken word is unclear, but sounds something like /gink/ or /yink/. The meaning is clearly that Oisean twists or otherwise roughly handles the boy's neck in order to break it. It is possible that the verb which Brian uses is *diongadh*, "to overcome, conquer" (Dwelly, 339); another possibility is *dinneadh*, meaning "to press, force down, cram, stuff" (Dwelly, 336).

an Fhèinneach 'dol fhathast [...] ach, shin mar chual mis' a' stòiridh co-dhiubh, aig mo sheanmhair.

**Date: November 1973**

**Collector: David Clement**

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 965**

Ah uill, Oisean, 'se àm -- tìd' na Fèinn, mar theireadh aid, 's bha triùir bhraithrean ann, agus bha aid, eh, 'fuireachd ann a', ann an trì bothanan, mar theireadh iad ris a's an uair sin, trì bothanan àirigh. Agus, 'se Oisean 'm bràthair bu shin'.

'S aon oidhch' stoirmeil a bh'ann. Thàinig feannag staigh gus a' -- feannag dhubh gus a' fear a b'òig', 'bràthair bu h-òig', 's, dh'fhoighnich a' fheannag, 's thuirt i ris 'm b'urra dhith cairtealan na h-oidhch' chur seachad, 's thuirt a' fear a b'òig', 'bràthair a b'òig' ris, "O, mach á seo, fheannag -- fheannag dhubh, no cuiridh mi an ceann diot le mo chorrage."

Chaidh a' sin 'n fheannag staigh gus an dàrna bràthair. 'S thuirt i ris 'm b'urra dhith cairtealan na h-oidhch' aig. 'S thuirt a' bràthair a b'òig' (*sic*) ris, "Mach á seo fheannag dhubh," thuirt es', "no cuiridh mi an ceann diot le mo chorrage."

Ach, thàinig i sin gus an taigh aig Oisean. Agus, thuirt Oisean, dar thàinig i staigh 's dh'fhoighnich i dhe Oisean am faigheadh i cairtealan na h-oidhch'.

"O," thuirt Oisean gu' robh i di-beatht' airson cairtealan na h-oidhch' fhaighinn. 'N dèidh na sin, Oisean, bha e 'dèanamh a' bhiadh 's, "Och uill," thuirt i ris, "dar thug thu dhomh cairtealan na h-oidhche, 'se 's colach gu' faod mi mo shuipèir fhaighinn."

"Och, airson na dh'itheas thus'," thuirt Oisean, "tha sin ceart gu leòr. Tha thu di-beatht'."

Dh'ith a-nis an fheannag dhen a' bhòrd a cuid biadh, làn a biadh 's, thàinig sin tìd' dhol a laigh 's, char Oisean 'na leabaidh, 's dar a dh'èirich e 'sa mhadainn, 's a thug e sùil, bha boirionnach ann a' sin cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e riamh.

Agus. [Pause.] Thuirt Oisean rith, "Ciamar a tha thu 'na do bhoirionnach cho brèagha seo a' diugh, agus a' raoir thàinig thu a-staigh 'nad fheannag?"

"Ah uill," thuirt am boirionnach ris, "tha mis' fo gheasan, agus gus an toireadh do leithid a-staigh mis', 's an toireadh aid dhomh leabaidh 's biadh, bhithinn-eas 'folbh 'nam fheannag. Ach a-nis," thuirt i, "tha mis' 'na, 'na mo bhean agad-as cho fad' 's a bhios sinn beò, nas lugh' na thilgeas thus' orm-as ann an argamaid 'sam bith a' riochd a's an tàinig mis' staigh, 's ma nì thu sin orm," thuirt i, "tha mis' a' folbh 'nam fheannag a-rithistich."

"Uill, uill," thuirt Oisean, "tha sin ceart gu leòr. 'S cha chan mis' riut sin gu brathach tuillidh."

Nis dar thàinig a' madainn 's dar thàinig a bhràithrean -- a dhithis bhràithrean -- staigh, bha e 'dèanamh [deiseil] airson an Fhèinn, 'dol don a' mhonadh, 's dar thàinig iad staigh, dar chunnaic aid a' boirionnach, bha iad an sin 'nan aghaidh fhèi', nach tug iad a-staigh i. Ach



bha i nis aig Oisean. Agus nis, chaidh nis iomadach bliadhn' seachad 's bha Oisean 's a bhean cuideachd 's, 'latha seo bha e 'folbh dhan an aonach 's, thuirt e -- 'se mial-choin a bh'ac', airson na fèidh 's, agus -- airson a bhith 'beirsinn air na fèidh 's bha -- thuirt Oisean rith', "Nis," thuirt e, "tha cuilean gu bhith aig a' ghall' sin an diugh," agus thuirt Oisean rith', "cuir sreang air amhaich a' chiad cuilean."

'S rinn a' bhean seo dar a bha 'chiad cuilean aig a' ghall'. Chuir i sreangan air 'amhaich. Agus, eh. Thàinig -- cha robh Oisean fad' air folbh 's cha robh 'gall mòran 'n dèidh na cuileanan bhith aic' dar thàinig duin' gus an doras. Ghnog e aig an doras. 'S thuirt e ris a' bhean robh na cuileanan aig a' ghall', 's thuirt i gu' robh.

"Uill," thuirt es', "tha mis' ag iarraidh a' chiad cuilean."

Char a' bhean staigh 's thug i mach aon de na cuileanan ach cha tug i mach a' chiad fear. Thug i mach aon diubh 's, thug i dha e. Rug e air a' chuilean 's rug e air a' chluais air 's, thog e 's chrath e e, 's shìn an cuilean air sgailail 's, "O," thuirt e, "cha b'e sin a' chiad cuilean." Ach thug i dha gus a' tug i dha a' fear bho dheireadh dhiubh 's. A' shin, bha aic' ris a' -- cha robh i 'dol a thoir dha am fear ud a' chiad cuilean, ach thuirt e rith' mur toireadh i dha a' chiad cuilean, gun gearradh e an ceann dith. Sin, leis an eagail 's a h-uile dad a bh'ann, chaidh is', 's thug i dha an cuilean. 'S rug e air a' chluais air a' chuilean sin 's chrath e e, 's chrath e e, 's chrath e e. Ged bhiodh e 'ga chrathadh fhathastaich, cha tigeadh [smeac] às. 'S chuir e an cuilean fo achlais, 's ghobh e a' rathad.

Thàinig sin Oisean, 's bha cabhag air dar thàinig e staigh bhon a', an aonach 's, dh'fhoighnich e càit' a' robh na cuileanan. Nis, dar a dh'fholbh a' chiad cuilean chuir a' bhean, chuir i sreangan air a' fear eil'. 'S rinn Oisean an dearbh rud agus a rinn an duin' a bh'aig' a' doras, shìn e air -- 'gan crathadh air a' chluais. 'S dar chrathadh e aid, bha iad 'sgailail, gus an tug e dha-- "Uill," thuirt i -- dh'innis i sin dha, gun tàinig duin' gus a' doras, gu' robh e 'dol do thoir an ceann dith nas lugha na bheireadh i dha an cuilean.

O, 's chaill Oisean an sin ... 'cheann 's, thuirt e rith', "O, fheannag dhubh," thuirt es', "cò dh'earbhadh an còrr riut?"

'S cho luath 's a thuirt es' sin, dh'èirich is' 'na feannag 's, dh'fholbh i mach. 'S ghobh Oisean as a dèidh. 'S bha Oisean 'ga leanachd 's 'ga leanachd, ach bho dheireadh, shuidh an fheannag air creig. Thàinig Oisean an àird far a' robh i, 's thuirt e rith' gu' robh i, gu' robh e ag iarraidh mathanas 's i thighinn air ais.

"Thig air ais."

"O," thuirt i, "chan urra dhomh a dhol air ais gu brathach tuillidh. Thuirt mi riut a' chiad madainn a chunnaic thu mi, na' tilg' orm-as a' cruth a's an tàinig mi staigh, nach b'urra dhomh dhol a-mach -- nach b'urra dhomh fuireach, gum biodh agam ri folbh." Agus, eh, "Ach seo," thuirt i, "shin agad fàinn' dhut, agus cuir a' fàinn' air do chorrage. 'S fhad' 's bhios a' fàinn' sin

agad-as, bios thu beò. Ach, dè 'sa' bith a nì thu, na toir dhìot a' fàinn'. Cum a' fàinn' air do chorràg."

Thàinig a' sin Oisean air ais, gus an àirigh aig', 's bha e sin 'na sheann duin' 's. Agus, eh, cha robh e 'n comas mòran a dhèanamh. 'S thàinig sin duin' eil' ris an canadh aid Para Naona Cleireach, agus bha es' 'sgriobhadh leabhraichean air stòiridh Oisean, air àiteachan Oisean. Agus, bha Oisean 'n sin, bha e air a' leabaidh. Cha robh e 'n comas a thighinn às a leabaidh. Agus a' latha seo thàinig Para Naona Cleireach a-staigh 's, bha, eh, fiadh aig'. 'S thuirt e ri Oisean, "Robh fiadh riamh a's an Fhèinn a'ad bha cho mòr sin?"

Bha Oisean dall 's bha e bodhar 's thuirt Oisean ris, "Cuir air mo bhois e."

Chuir e air a' bhois e 's chothromaich Oisean a-bhàn 's an àird e 's, thuirt Oisean ris, "Haaa," thuirt Oisean, " 's minig uair a chunna mis' spàg isean a' lòn-dubh nas muth' na sin."

'S leis an fhearg chuir Oisean air Para Naona Cleireach, char e air ais gus an taigh aig' 's na leabhraichean bha e 'sgriobhadh le, le Oisean, shìn e -- bha e 'gan tilgeil a's an tein'. Agus, bha caileag aig', 's shìn a' leanabh -- bha i 'toirt pàirt dhe na leabhraichean air ais às an tein' 's 'gan cumail.

Ach, nis bha balach aig Oisean, bha ag obair dha 's thuirt e ris, am balach, " 'N urra dhut mis'," thuirt e, "thoir a-mach?"

"O 's urrainn," thuirt a' balach.

Thug a' balach sin mach e.

"Nis," thuirt Oisean, "tha sinn 'dol leithid seo a dh'àit' a's a' mhon'."

Ruig iad an t-àit' bh'ann co-dhiubh, bha coille bheith' ann, agus luachair. 'S thuirt, eh, Oisean ris a' bhalach, "Dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O, tha mi 'faicinn coille bheith'," thuirt a' balach, "agus, eh, luachair, luachair tha -- luachair mòr a th'ann."

"Uill, dèan thus' air a', air a' choille bheith' agus air a' luachair. Coille bheith'."

Eh, dar ruig iad a' luachair, thuirt Oisean ris, "Beil thu 'faicinn, eh, am preas as moth' dhen luachair?"

"Tha," thuirt a' balach.

"Uill, streap an àird ris, 's dar a ruigeas thu a' bàrr aig' " -- thigeadh a' luachair leis. 'S rinn a' balach seo 's, dar a thàinig a' luachair 's am ploc cuide ris, dh'fhoighnich e ris a' bhalach, "Dè tha thu 'faic--?"

"O, tha mi 'faicinn," thuirt e, "coin ann a' seo cho brèagha 's a chunna mi riamh, agus. 'S tha aon tè bhuidhe," thuirt e, " 'na' measg ann a' sin 's chan fhac mi dad riamh as brèagha' na i."

"A, Biorach a' Bhuidheag bhochd," thuirt Oisean, "an cù bu meas' bha riamh a's an Fhèinn. Leig mach i."

'S thàinig Biorach a' Bhuidheag mach 's, dar a thàinig i a-mach, cha mhòr nach d'ith i Oisean leis an toileachdainn.

"Nis," thuirt Oisean ris, "dèan toll a's an talamh."

Rinn a' balach toll a's an talamh 's.

"'N d'rinn thu a toll?" thuirt Oisean.

"Rinn."

"Uill, cuir a-bhàn do cheann ann."

Chuir am balach a-bhàn a cheann a's an toll.

"Nis," thuirt Oisean ris, "cum do cheann a's an toll."

'S thug Oisean aon sgread às -- "Halo!" às. Bha na creagan 's na monaidhean, bha aid cha mhòr a' spealgadh á chèil' leis a' ghlaodh aig Oisean. 'S thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Tog do cheann 's seall dè chì thu."

"Ooo," thuirt a' balach, "tha mi 'faicinn," thuirt e, "fèidh," thuirt e. "Chan fhac' mi dad riamh 's cho mòr riuth'."

"Ach," thuirt Oisean ris, "greigh lodan," thuirt es'. "Leig seachad aid. Cuir bhàn do cheann a-rithist."

Chuir a' balach sin bhàn a cheann rithist, 's thug Oisean an ath ghlaodh às. 'S thuirt e ris a' bhalach a cheann a thogail.

"Ooo," thuirt am balach, "chan urra dhomh mo cheann a thogail. Tha -- eh, cha mhòr nach eil e a' spealgadh a chèil' agam."

"Och, tog," thuirt e, "tog do cheann."

Thog a' sin 'balach 'cheann 's, dar a thog e a cheann, "O uill," thuirt a' balach, "ma bha a' chiad fheadhainn mòr, chan fhac' mi dad riamh," thuirt e, "as muth' na seo 's tha aon fear mòr mòr air an toiseach ac'."

"Och, uill," thuirt Oisean, "dh'fhaodadh gun dèan sin an gnothach. Leig às Biorach a' Bhuidheag."

Chaidh Biorach a' Bhuidheag as dèidh 'n fhèidh.

'S thug Oisean glaoth, "Do rug i air?"

"O rug," thuirt a' balach. "Leag i e."

Leag i sin a' fiadh 's.

"Nis," thuirt, thuirt Oisean ris a' bhalach, "thoir thus' leis a' fiadh 's beòthaich tein' agus bruich a' fiadh a's a' ghrollach aige fhèin. Agus thoir dhomh-as e."

Rinn a' balach mar a thuirt Oisean, rinn e an tein' 's, ròist e a' biadh, am fiadh a's a' [ghrollach]. 'S dar bha e 'sealltainn robh am fiadh ullamh, deis airson thoir a dh'Oisean, thug e bideag bheag às 's chuir e 'na bial e. 'S dh'ith sin Oisean a' fiadh mar a bha e, 's dar a dh'ith e 'fiadh, bha Oisean làidir, 's chitheadh e. Bha a shealladh aig a-rithistich, 's cha robh e bodhar.

"Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "tha mis' cho math 's a bha mi roimhe."

"Ach, uh, aon rud," thuirt a' balach ris. "Tha mi 'faicinn leus air aon de na sùilean agaibh."

"Tha," thuirt e ris. "leus. Thug thus' bideag bheag às an fhiadh mus tug thu dhomh-as e, agus shìn a'ad rud chuir a' leus air mo shùil. Ach, mo thogair," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "tha mis' a-nis *fit* gu leòr rithistich. Nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "tha mi 'creidsinn gu' bheil thus' [g iarraidh do bhiadh]."

'S ghobh e 'bhogh' saighead, 's char e bhàn gus a' choille bheith', 's leag e lòn-dubh. 'S dh'ith a' balach bha cuide ri Oisean, dh'ith e na b'urra dha dhen lòn-dubh 's, thug Oisean spàg 'lòn-dubh dhachaidh cuide ris. 'S thàinig e gu Para Naona Cleireach, char e gus a' dorasd aig' 's, bha bòrd air an ùrlar. Thilg e spàg an isean lòn-dubh air a', air a' bhòrd, 's dar thilg e air a' bhòrd i, eh, bhris na ceithir casan bhon a' bhòrd le cuideam 'spàg.

"Nis," thuirt e ris, " 'n e, 'n e breugan bha mi ag ràdh riut a-nis?"

Ach a-nis, dar a chunnaic e seo, na, na bideagan dhe na pàipearan 's dhe na leabhraichean, leabhraichean bha ann, shìn e sin 'gan toir air ais 's 'ga' cuir ri chèil' 's, agus eh, eh ... gus a' d'fhuair e na b'urra dha air ais a-rithist dhiubh ach, cha d'fhuair e leth 's na bh'aig' a leabhraichean.

Ach a-nis chaidh a' tìd' seachad 's, ghobh Oisean, ghobh e a' leabaidh rithistich. Uill, cha robh biadh ann a dhèanadh feum dha. 'S aon latha thug eh, thug e glaodh ris a' bhalach bha cuide ris.

"Thoir mach mi," thuirt e, "gus an allt."

Thug a' balach mach gus an allt e 's thug e siabunn agus searadair leis cuide ris. Agus, eh, bha a' balach 'glanadh Oisean a's an allt. 'S dar bha e 'ga ghlanadh, thug e a' fàinn' dhen a' chorrach aig', agus eh, chuir e air clach e. 'S dar chuir e a' fàinn' air clach, thàinig feannag 's thog i 'fàinn' 's, dh'fholbh i leis. 'S dh'fhairich Oisean rudeigin 'tighinn air fhèin, gu' robh 'bàs 'tighinn, 's thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Beil a' fàinn' -- ?"

"Chan eil," thuirt a' balach, "thug a', thug an fheannag leis e."

"O tha mi 'creidsinn gu' tug," thuirt e. "O uill," thuirt am balach -- thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "chunnaic thus' rud nach fhac' duin' eil' ach thu fhèin, 's chan innis' thus dha ghin tuillidh dè a chunnaic thu."

'S dar a bha a' balach 'ga ghlanadh, chuir e 'làimh air cùl amhaich a' bhalach seo 's, bhris e 'amhaich, 's thuit 'balach a's an allt 's bha e marbh 's. Thàinig Oisean staigh dhan an àirigh aig' 's, cha, cha d'èirich e às a' sin, theirig e. Agus cho fad' 's fiosrach mis', tha sin ceann a' stòiridh, thàinig air a' stòiridh, air Stòiridh Oisean.

STÒIRIDH OISEAN AS DÈIDH NA FÈINN'

**Date:** April, 1979

**Collector:** David Clement

**Linguistic Survey of Scotland Tape 1111**

**D.C.:** Culrain, April, 1979. Siuthad.

**B.S.:** Tha thu ag iarraidh Stoiridh Oisean.

**D.C.:** Tha.

**B.S.:** Uill, seo a'd mar a tha i, ma tha. Bha trì braithrean, triùir bhraithrean, bha aid ann an trì bothanan àirigh, mar their sinn. Agus aon oidhch' -- oidhch' stoirmeil ann -- bha iad 'suidh 'sa taighean ac', 's thàinig feannag staigh. Agus, eh, thuirt i ri aon de na braithrean, thàinig an fheannag staigh 's dh'fhoighnich i ris, am faigheadh i, eh, cairtealan na h-oidhch' bhuaith'. 'S thuirt e rith', "Mach á seo, 'fheannag dhubh," thuirt e, "no cuiridh mi 'n ceann dhiot le mo chorrage."

Char i shin gus an darna brathair, 's dh'fhoighnich i ris 'm faigheadh i cuideachas na h-oidhch' bhuaith'. 'S thuirt es' an dearbh rud rith': "Mach á seo, no cuiridh mi 'n ceann dhiot leis mo chorrage."

Ach thàinig i sin gu Oisean, am brathair bu shin'. Agus thuirt i ri Oisean, an toireadh e dhith cairtealan na h-oidhch' 's, thug Oisean sùil oirr' 's "Och, 'fheannag bhochd," thuirt e, airson a rùm ghobhas thus', thig staigh," thuirt e.

Thàinig shin 'n fheannag staigh 's thug e dhith -- dh'ith aid am biadh cuideachd, aig a' bhòrd 's, thàinig sin tìd' dhol laigh'. 'S char Oisean 's, laigh', 's char an fheannag laigh' air a chùlaibh.

'S dar a dhùisg Oisean 'sa madainn, dar a thug e sùil air an fheannag, chunnaic e boirionnach cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e riamh.

"Ooo," thuirt e rith', "ciamar," thuirt e, "thàinig thu staigh 'nad fheannag 's tha thu 'n diugh 'na do bhoirionnach?"

"Uill," thuirt i ris, "bha mis' fo gheasan. Agus gus an toireadh cuideigin a-staigh mis', 's gun toireadh aid dhan leabaidh ac' mi, bhithinn-is 'nam fheannag." Agus: "Bidh mis'," thuirt i, " 'na mo bhean agad, cho fad' agus nach tilg thus' orm-as a' riochd an tàinig mi staigh."

"O cha thilg," ors Oisean.

Bha iad t-sin ann a' sin airson fad' -- bha Oisean mach huile latha, e fhèi' 's a chuid braithrean a's a' -- an Fhèinn, 's e 'sealg. 'S aon latha dh'èirich e 's, bha gall' mhial-chù aig', 's bha cuileanan gu bhith aic'. Agus, thuirt e rith', ris a' bhean, "Nis," thuirt e, "bios cuileanan aig a'



ghall' sin, 'n diugh. Agus, a' chiad cuilean, cuir streanga, no rioban, air an amhaich aig', gus an aithnich thu e."

"O nì," thuirt a' bhean.

"Agus, dh'fhaodadh," thuirt e, "gu' tig fear ann a' seo bhios 'g iarraidh na cuileanan -- aon de na cuileanan. Ach na toir dha a' chiad cuilean."

"O cha toir," thuirt a' bhean. "Cha toir mi dha a' chiad cuilean."

Char Oisean nis mach dhan a' bheinn a shealg, 's dar thàinig e staigh, dh'fhoighnich e rith' robh na cuileanan aig a' ghall'.

"O bha," ars i.

"O ma tha," thuirt e, "thoir suas 'chiad cuilean am faic mi e."

*Agus -- O chan e, chaidh mi mearachd.*

Dar a bha Oisean air folbh co-dhiubh, bha na cuileanan aig a' ghall'. 'S thàinig fear gus an dorus, agus eh, dh'iarr e a' cuilean. 'S thàinig e -- tug a' bhean staigh e, eh, thug i dha aon de na cuileanan. 'S rug e air 's, chrath e e, air 'chluais e, 's shìn a' cuilean air sgriachail 's, "Och," thuirt e, "chan e sin e." Ach thug i gus tug i suas 'm fear bho dheireadh dhiubh. Bha es' a' crathadh a chluais agus thilg e air ais aid, gus robh i, tuirt e rith' mur toireadh i dha 'n cuilean, gu' gearradh e h-amhaich. Thug i sin suas a' chiad cuilean dha 's, bha i cha mhòr 'sgal 's 'còineadh 'toir dha a' chuilean. 'S chrath e e, 's chrath e e, 's chrath e e, 's chuir e 'm fear sin fo 'achlais. Dh'fholbh e.

Nis, dar thàinig Oisean dhachaidh bhon a' t-sealg aig', dh'fhoighnich e rith' robh na cuileanan aig a' ghall'.

"O bha," thuirt e (*sic*).

'S dar a dh'fholbh am fear leis na cuileanan chuir i streang air amhaich fear eil' dhiubh. 'S rinn Oisean an dearbh rud agus a rinn am fear a thàinig gus an dorus. Thug i suas an cuilean 's chrath e air 'chluais e 's, shìn an cuilean air sgailail 's, "Och," thuirt e rith', "tha thu nis 'tarraing asam, tha thu -- chan e sin a' chiad cuilean." Ach thug e (*sic*) sin suas fear eil' dha 's, chrath e e. "Och," thuirt e rith', "thoir suas an cuilean ceart, a' chiad cuilean."

Dh'innis i sin dha, "O," thuirt i, "thàinig fear ann a' seo, 's bha e 'dol gam mharbhadh," thuirt i, "a ghearradh m'amhaich mur an toirinn dha an cuilean, 's bha agam ri thoir dha e."

"Ooo," thuirt e rith', "cò dh'iarradh an còrr air feannag dhubh?"

'S dar a thuirt e sin rith', leum is' mach a' dorus 'na feannag. 'S dar leum is' mach ghobh Oisean as a dèidh. Stad, eh, an fheannag suid' air creag a' sin 's creag a' seo 's, clach a' sin 's a' seo, bha Oisean as dèidh. Ach bho dheireadh thall, dh'fhas Oisean glè lag, agus dh'fhuirich -- sheas an fheannag gus an tàinig e.

"O," thuirt e rith', "thig air ais. Thig air ais," thuirt e.

"O," thuirt i, "chan urrainn dhomh-as dhol air ais tuillidh." Thuirt i, "Thilg thu orm-as a' riochd a's an tàinig mi staigh 's chan urra dhomh-as dhol air ais tuillidh. Ach seo," thuirt i ris.

Thug i am fainn' dhen a' chas aic'. "Seo," thuirt i, "cuir sin air, air do lùdag, air do chorrach. 'S fhad' 's bhios am fainn' sin ort-as, bios thu beò. Ach ma bheir thu dhìot e, bios thu marbh. 'S nis," thuirt i, "bi 'dol dhachaidh. Chan urra dhomh-as tilltinn," thuirt i.

Ach bha Oisean an sin, bha e cho lag 's bha e cho sgèth 's, bha e 'tuiteam 's 'g eirigh as a' fhraoch. Ach, bha taigh ann a' sin 's fear ris an canadh iad Para Naona Cleireach. 'S thug e sùil a-mach, 's chunnaic e seo Oisean ag èirigh 's 'tuiteam a's a' fhraoch. 'S ruith e staigh gus a' bhean 's thuirt e rith', "Fuin, eh, bonnach," thuirt e, " 's cuir a' *grid* a-staigh ann. Cuir a' *grid* a-st-- fuin a' *griddle* a-staigh 'sa bhonn'."

Ach thàinig e nis staigh 's, 'se Oisean a bh'ann. Thug a' bhean dha biadh, 's thug i dha am bonnach a's a' robh a' *griddle*. Dh'ith Oisean am bonnach agus dh'ith e a' *griddle*. Ach bha Oisean, bha e, bha e dall 's bha e bodhar, 's bha e glè lag. Bha e sin 'g inns' na stoiridhean aig' dha 's rud a dh'èirich dhan Fhèinn aig' 's, mar dh'èirich dha fhèin. 'S bha iad 'ga' sgriobhadh bhàn ann a' leabharaichean 's.

Char Para Naona Cleireach mach latha, e fhèin 's an gill' aig', 's leag e -- bha e 'sealg 's, thug e staigh fiadh. 'S thuirt e ri Oisean, "Robh fiadh riamh air an Fhèinn a'd, Oisean, bha cho mòr sin?"

"Cuir air mo bhoise," thuirt Oisean. Chuir e air a bhois e, 's chothromaich Uisean-- eh, Oisean 'm fiadh bhàn 's an àird.

"Hah," thuirt Oisean, " 's minic uair a chu-- chunna mis' spàg isean na lòn-dubh nas muth' na sin."

Agus leis an fhearg, leum e air na leabhraichean bha e 'sgriobhadh 's bha e 'ga' tilgeil a's an tein'. 'S a' chloinn, dar bha es' 'tilgeil leabhraichean a's an tein', bha 'chloinn 'ga' toir feadhainn diubh air ais às an tein'. Agus. Ach co-dhiubh, 'sa madainn, bha -- thuirt e ris a' bhalach òg bha a's an taigh, " 'N urr' dhut mis' thoir a-mach?" thuirt e.

" 'S urrainn," thuirt am balach.

"Uill, tiugainn thus' cuide rium-as."

'S lean iad sin air adhart, 's thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O tha mi 'faicinn," thuirt e, "coill' bheith'," thuirt e.

"Uill, dèan thus' air a' choille tha sin."

Lean a' balach air a' choill' 's, dar a thàinig e, thuirt e, "Beil thu 'faicinn -- bheil luachair ann a' sin?"

"Tha," thuirt am balach ris. "Tha luachair ann 's tha e cho àrd ris an craobh."

"Uill, ruith thus'," thuirt e, "agus beir air a' fear as muth' dhiubh. 'S beir air a', air a' bhàrr aig', 's leag leis sin thugad."

'S dar a thug a' gille seo, dh'èirich a' ploc às a' talamh leis.

"Dè tha thu 'faicinn?" thuirt e.

"O tha mi 'faicinn coin," thuirt e, "cho brèagha 's a chunna mi riamh."

"Ahh," thuirt Oisean, "Biorach a' Bhuidheag bho chd," thuirt e, "an cù bu meas' bha riamh a's an Fhèinn. Leig mach i."

Leig e sin mach i. 'S dar leig e mach i, thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "Dèan nis toll a's an talamh, 's cuir do cheann bhàn ann."

Rinn am balach mar dh'iarr e, 's chuir e 'cheann bhàn a's an toll. 'S thug Oisean an èigh ud às, 's chluinneadh si' a' *sound* a's na creagan 's, a's na monaidhean. 'S thuirt e ris a' ghill, "Tog do cheann."

"O, chan urrainn mi, Oisean," thuirt e, "chan urrainn mi mo cheann--"

"Och, fhaod' tu. Tog thus' do cheann."

"Thog a' sin 'm balach a cheann 's, "Dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O tha mi 'faicinn fiadh -- fèidh," thuirt e, "làn dhiubh. Chan fhac' mi dad riamh as muth' na aid."

"Ach," thuirt Oisean, "greigh lodan, leig seachad aid. Cuir a-bhàn do cheann a-rithistich."

"O chan urrainn mi," thuirt a' balach, "mo cheann chur bhàn rithist. 'S cha mhòr nach eil mo cheann a' sgoltadh."

"Och, shiuthad. Cuir thus' bhàn do cheann."

Chuir e sin bhàn a cheann, 's dar chuir e bhàn a cheann thug Oisean an "Alo" ud a-rithistich 's, thug e glaodh ris: "Tog do cheann."

"O," thuirt am balach, "tha dìreach mo cheann air spealgadh á chèile."

"Och, tog e."

Thog e sin a cheann.

"Dè tha thu 'faicinn nis?"

"O," thuirt e, "ma bha an fheadhainn ud mòr, tha an fheadhainn seo fad nas moth'."

"Hah! Leig seachad aid."

Thuirt e ris a' bhalach a cheann chur bhàn rithistich. 'S thug Oisean an ath ghlaodh às. Thug e an èigh às, 's chluinneadh sin e '*soundadh*<sup>1</sup> a's na monaidhean 's a's na creagan.

"Tog do cheann nis," thuirt e.

"O," thuirt a' balach, "chan urra dhomh-s' mo cheann a thogail. Dìreach chan urr' mi thogail," thuirt e.

"Tog an àird [do] cheann," thuirt e.

Ach thog e sin a cheann.

"Ooo," thuirt e, "tha mi 'faicinn fèidh. O, chan fhac' mis' dad riamh, riamh dha seo," thuirt e, "cho mòr riuth'. 'S tha aon fear mòr, mòr air an tòiseach ac'," thuirt e.

"Och, dh'fhaodadh dèan' e 'n gnothach. Leig às," thuirt e, "Biorach a' Bhuidheag." Leig e sin às Biorach a' Bhuidheag.

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<sup>1</sup>Gaelicisation: "sounding".

Agus thuirt Oisean ris, "Do leig i e?"

"Leig," thuirt a' balach.

"O ma tha, ruith agus nis gheobh sinn e. Agus dar gheobh thu e," thuirt e, "ròist a' brìgh a's a' ghreallach aig' fhèin."

Agus, rinn a' balach sin 's, 's thug e sin, "Nis," thuirt e, "Na toir *bit* às," thuirt e. "Thoir dhomh-as am fiadh mar a tha e." Thug e a-nis dha Oisean am fiadh, ach dar bha e 'dol thoir dha, thug e piocag às an fhiadh 's chuir e 'na bhial e. Agus, eh, dar rinn e sin, dar dh'ith Oisean e, bha Oisean 'faicinn, 's bha e cho làidir 's a bha e roimhe.

Ach, thuirt a' balach, "Tha si' a-nis," thuirt e, "cho làidir 's a bha si' roimhe, ach, tha leus bheag air an t-sùil agai'."

"Tha," thuirt e ris. "Shin a'd a' bhìdeag thug thus' às an fhiadh." Thuirt e, "Nan robh thus' air sin fhagail, cha robh seo air mo shùil-as."

"O tha mi duilich," thuirt a' balach.

"Och," thuirt e, "na gobh dad às. Agus nis," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "bios an t-acras ort-as. Bheir mis' dhut gu leòr biadh an ceann greiseag. Cuir Biorach a' Bhuidheag air ais."

Chuir e sin Biorach a' Bhuidheag air ais, staigh dhan a' phloc a's an talamh, cuide ris a' chòrr dhe na còin 's, 's thug e leis bogh' saighead. 'S char e bhàn do, na craobhan beith' 's, leag e, eh, isean lòn-dubh. 'S dar a leag e i, thug e sin dhan a' bhalach i airson a h-ith', a ròstadh dha fhèin agus biadh dhèanamh dheth. 'S mus tug e dha i, gheàrr e a' spàg dhì. 'S char e sin dhachaidh gu, gu Para Naona Cleireach leis.

"Nis," thuirt e ris, "gu breugaich mis' thus'," thuirt e. Thilg e spàg isean a' lòn-dubh air a' bhòrd, 's dh'fholbh-- bhris na ceithir casan fon a' bhòrd.

"Nis," thuirt e ris, "an e breugan bha mi ag inns' dhut nis?" thuirt e.

Och, ghobh e nis an t-aithreachas, gu' do loisg e na leabhraichean bha e 'sgriobhadh. 'S bha e 'toir air ais bhon a' chloinn e, na -- 'n fheadhainn a [chum] iad.

Agus -- ach nis, an ceann beagan tìd' dh'fhàs Oisean glè lag a-rithistich. Agus a' latha seo, thuirt a' balach ris, "Ach, cha chreid mi nach toir mi mach si' agus nach glan mi a's an allt si'." Bha e sin 'ghlanadh a's an allt. Thug e sin mach Oisean cuide ris, 's bha e 'ga, 'ga nigh, 'ga ghlanadh, 'aodann 's 'làmh an a's an allt. 'S dar a thug e gus an allt e, thug e dheth 'm fàinn', 's chuir e air clach e. Thug e am fàinn' dhe 'làimh, dhe lùdag Oisean, 's chuir e air clach e. 'S dar a thà-- dar chuir es' air a' chlach e, thàinig 'n fheannag, 's thog i 'm fàinn' 'na gob, 's dh'fholbh i leis. 'S dh'aithnich Uisea-- eh, Oisean, gu' robh 'bas 'tighinn air.

"Uill," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "chunnaic thus' rud," thuirt e, "nach fhac' duine riamh roimhe, agus chan innis thus' dha ghin eil' e."

'S mus do theirig e fhèin, chuir e 'làimh an cùl an amhaich a' bhalaich 's, thachd e e, 's thuit e, e fhèin 's Oisean ann a' sin 's. 'S shin a'd nis Stòiridh Oisean.

## STÒIRIDH OISEAN AS DÈIDH NA FÈINN'

**Date:** 14 April 1993

**Collector:** Carol Zall

Stòiridh Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn', bha triùir bhraithrean ann. 'S bha aid ann a', an triùir -- trì taighean beag. 'S aon oidhch', bha aid aig a' suipeir, ag ithe a' suipear. 'S thàinig feannag staigh. 'S dh'iarr i, an toireadh e dh-- an toireadh aid dhith 'biadh. 'S [chuir ... ] bràthairean Uis-- Oisean, chuir iad mach i, an t-eun.

"Tog á seo," thuirt e, "no cuiridh mi an ceann dhìot le mo chorrage."

Ach thàinig i gu Oisean. Thuirt e, "Och," thuirt es', "airson na dh'itheas thus'," thuirt e, "thig a-staigh," thuirt es'. "Ith dhe sin."

Bha an fheannag 'ith' cuide ris.

Thàinig a-nis 'tìd' dhol a laigh'.

"Uill," thuirt an fheannag ri Oisean, "nis," thuirt i, "thug thu mo shuipeir dhomh 's rinn thu dhìom,<sup>1</sup> nach toir thu a-nis dhomh ... comann leabaidh dhomh?"

"Och," thuirt e rith', "thig a-staigh air mo chulaibh."

Thàinig an, an, an fheannag staigh air cùlaibh Oisean. Bha iad sin 'na' laigh', 's dar a dhùisg Oisean 'sa mhadainn, sheall e air a' chluasag, 's chunnaic e boirionnach, chan fhac' e boirionnach riamh bha cho brèagha rith'.

['S dh'èirich is'] 'sa mhadainn, 's bhruidhinn is' ris, "Nis," thuirt i ri Oisean, "thàinig mi staigh raoir. 'S bha mi aig do chuid bràithrean. 'S chuir aid-s' mach mi ach thug thu staigh mi. 'S thug thu dhomh biadh 's thug thu dhomh leabaidh. Nis," thuirt i, "bidh mis' 'nam bhean a-- 'na mo bhean agad, cho fada 's a bhios mi beò. Ach aon rud," thuirt i, "gu bràthach," thuirt i, "ma thig dad eatorrainn, nach tilg orm-as a' riochd a's an tàinig mi staigh. Nach can thus' ... 'feannag' rium, na chan urr' dhomh-as fuireach, folbhaidh mi. Feumaidh mi folbh," thuirt i.

An sin, dar a thàinig a' latha 's a chunnaic a bhràithrean am boirionnach brèagha a bha seo aig a' ghill', shìn iad-s' a' [sabaid] ri chèil'. O, [...], o *trouble* bha seo, [...].

"Dh'fhaodadh a' bhean sin bhith agam-as."

"Chan e ach dh'fhaodadh i bhith agam-as. Ach tha i a-nis aig Oisean."

Agus. Thug Oisean -- bha e a's a' mhòn'. 'S thug duin' sùil 's, chunnaic e an duin' seo 'tighinn 's. Chaidh e [...] 'san taigh 's thuirt e ris, a' bhean, "O," thuirt e, " "Fuin bonnach, dèan

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<sup>1</sup>"*rinn thu dhìom*": an idiom which B.S. uses, which in this instance could be translated as "you did well by me"; see the first page of *Am Bodach Baigeir*, May 1974, for another example, where the phrase used is "*char dèanamh dheth*," i.e., "he was done well to".



bonnach" thuirt e, " 's fuin a' ghriddle a's a' bhonnach, dèan a' gri-- cuir a' ghriddle a's a' bhonnach. Cha chreid mis'," thuirt e, "nach e sin Oisean, tha 'tighinn."

Thàinig sin Oisean gus an taigh. 'S bha gille òg a's an taigh cuideachd, 's [cloinne] 's bean 's duin'. A' sin, thug a' bhean staigh Oisean, 's thug i dha teatha, 's thug i dha am bonnach leis a' ghriddle ann. Dh'ith Oisean a' griddle a's a' bhonnach, 's a h-uile dad a bh'ann, chru-- chruab e e. H-uile dad a bh'ann. 'S bha Para Naona Cleireach, mar a theireadh iad ris, bha e mach a' lath' sin. 'S thàinig e staigh le fiadh, 's thuirt e ri Oisean, "Oisean," thuirt e, "robh fiadh a-riamh air a', air an Fhèinn a'ad bha cho [] mòr sin?"

Thuirt Oisean nis, "Cuir air mo bhois e."

Chuir e air a' bhois e 's chothromaich Uisean -- Oisean bhàn 's an àird mar sin am fiadh.

"Heh," thuirt Oisean, " 's minic uair chunna mis' spàg isean a' lòn-dùbh na's truim' na sin."

Ach, o, Para Naona Cleireach, ghobh e, ghobh e an fhearg, 's thilg e na leabhraichean aig Oisean a's an tein' -- stòiridhean bha Oisean 'g inns', thilg e. Ach bha a' chloinn 'toir a-mach [feadhainn] de na pàipearan.

Agus. Thuirt e ris a' ghill' a bha 'san taigh, "tiugainn," thuirt e ris. "Thèid sinn a-mach a' diugh 's."

Bha 'm balach 'dol air adhart leis, 's bha Oisean 'tighinn 's.

Thuirt e ris, "Dè a tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O, tha mi 'faicinn coille," thuirt e.

"Uill dèan air a' choille tha sin."

'S dar a ruig aid a' choill', chan e coill' a bh'ann, 'se a bh'ann luachar. *It was rushes. Instead of a wood.* And -- Thuirt e ri' bala-- thuirt Oisean ris a' bhalach, "Streap thus' an àird a' preas luachar, gus an [dean] thu gus a' mhullach aig'. 'S leig leis a' bàrr aig' thighinn leat."

'S rinn e sin, shreap e 's leig e a' bàrr leis, 's thàinig am ploc às an talamh an àird. Thug e sùil 's bha toll a's a' talamh. 'S bha e làn chon.

"Dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O," thuirt a', an gille ris, ri Oisean, "tha toll bhàn a's a' talamh," thuirt e, " 's tha coin ann. 'S tha aon tè bhuidhe, air mullach ac', 's chan fhaca mi cù a-riamh as boidhch' na i."

"O, Bior' a' Bhuidheag bhoichd," thuirt e, "cù bu meas' bha riamh a's an Fhèinn. Leig mach i."

Thàinig i mach 's cha mhòr nach do dh'ith i Oisean leis an toileachdainn.

"Nis," thuirt e, Oisean. "Tha mi 'dol a thoir, 'dol a thoir glaoth asam."

Thug Oisean aon "halo" dhe ghlaodh às, thionndaidh na creagan 's na monaidhean leis. Chunnaic e 's, chuir Oisean na fèidh -- na fèidh air folbh, ['tighinn]. Chuir e a' ruaig orr' 's bha iad 'tighinn. Thuirt e ris a' ghill', "Dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O, tha mi 'faicinn," thuirt e, "drobh dhe, dhe, dhe fiadh, fèidh a' tighinn. 'S tha aon mhòr, mhòr air an toiseach ac'."

"Och," thuirt e ris, "leig seachad aid."

Leig iad seachad aid, 's thug e sin an ath ghlaodh às.

"O," thuirt a' balach ris, "Sg-- tha thu a' sgàineadh mo cheann."

Ach thàinig e, 's "Dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"O," thuirt e, " 'se ma bha an fheadhainn eil' mòr," thuirt e, "seo feadhainn as motha uile gu lèir. 'S tha aon fear mòr, mòr, mòr air an toiseach ac'."

"Ah, Biorach a' Bhuidheag, leig às i," thuirt e.

Char Biorach a' Bhuidheag as dèidh an fhiadh.

[Dh'fhoighnich e], "Do leag i e?"

"Leag," thuirt a' balach.

"Uill, ma tha," thuirt e, dar a ... gheobh thu e, ròisteadh thu 'biadh, a's a' ghrollach aig' fhèin. 'S bheir thu dhomh-as e, ri ith' e."

Leag an cù a' fiadh 's, chaidh an gille 's, fhuair e a' fiadh 's ròist e a's a' ghro-- ghrollach aige fhèin e. 'S thug e dha Oisean e, ach mas tug e dha, thug e piocag bheag às, chuir e 'na bhial fhèin e. Bha Oisean nis cho làidir 's a bha e riamh. Dar a dh'ith e a bhiadh.

"Nis," thuirt Uis-- Oisean ris a' ghill, "tha mi cho làidir 's a bha mi riamh."

"Ach, seall," thuirt e, "tha leus air an t-sùil agai'."

"O, tha," thuirt e, "shin a'ad a' bhideag bheag a chuir-- a thug thu, thug thusa às an fhiadh."

"O, uill," thuirt an gille ris, "tha mi duilich, nan robh fhios agam-as air sin, cha tug mi a' bhideag."

"Och," thuirt e, "chan eil e gu diuthair. Nis," thuirt e, "tha an t-acras ort-as. Agus breugnaich' sinne, Para Naona Cleireach. Nì sinn breugach e."

Thill e bhàn gus a' choille tha seo, chaidh e sin bhàn gu craobh'n beithe, coille bheith'. Ghobh e leis am bogha saighead aig'. Thug e 's, tharraing e 's, leag e lòn-dubh. 'S bha a-nis a' balach, dol 'ga h-ith. Dol 'ga ròstadh e. Ach gheàrr e a' liais<sup>2</sup> dhith, 's thug e leis e. Dh'ith a' balach nis a' lias, thàinig e fhèi' 's Oisean air ais. [Pause.]

Agus. [Pause.] Thuirt an fheannag ri Oisean, thug i, thug, thug, thug an fheannag fàinne a dh'Oisean. 'S thuirt i ris, "Fhad 's a bhios sin air do chorrach, bios thu beò. Ach ma thig e dhiot, bios thu marbh." [Pause.]

Dar a bha e as dèidh an fheannag. Thuirt an fheannag ris, "Chan urrainn dhomh tilleadh nis cuide riut, Oisean. Thilg thu orm-as a' riochd a's an tàinig mi staigh, 's chan urra' dhomh tilleachainn tuillidh. Ach seo," thuirt i, 's thug i dha am fàinn'. " 'S fhad 's a bhios sin a'ad. bios thu beò, ach ma chailleas thu am fàinn' no ma thig dad eile air, bios thu marbh."

"Och, uill," thuirt Oisean, "tha mi duilich gun do thi-- gun tuiirt mi riut, eh."

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<sup>2</sup>"*liais*"; for "*lias*," "thigh"

"Uill," thuirt i, "dh'innis mi dhut, nach tilg-- nach, gun a' riochd a's an tàinig mi staigh a thilgeil orm, nach b'urra' dhomh fuireach cuide riut." Agus.

Nis, char aid air ais gus a' taigh aig Para Naona Cleireach. Thilg Uise-- eh, Oisean a' spàg isean air a', air a' bhòrd aig'. 'S bhrìst a' bòrd.

"Sheo a-nis," thuirt e ris. "Shin a'ad, cò as truim', sin na a' fiadh agad-as?"

"O," thuirt e, thuirt a', thuirt an duin' ris, ri Oisean, "tha mi duilich," thuirt e, "gu' tuirt mi sin riut. Tha," thuirt e. " 'Se spàg isean lòn-dubh bu-- bu thruim' na a' fiadh bha agam-as."

Ach bha e nis 'tional na' leabhraichean 's na pàipearan 's bha e 'gan toir dhan a' chloinn'.

'S thug a' balach sùil air Oisean 's. "Ach," thuirt e ri Oisean, "tha mi 'dol gad thoir mach," thuirt e, "tha mi 'dol a ghlanadh thu a's an allt thu."

Thug e mach am ba-- an gill', thug an gille a-mach e, 's bha e 'glanadh Oisean a's an allt. 'S thug, thug iad a' fàinne dheth -- thug e am fàinn' dhe lùdag Oisean, 's chuir e air clach a's an allt e. 'S thàinig feannag 's, thog i am fàinn' 'na gob. 'S dar a rinn i sin, dh'aithn-- dh'aithnich Oisean gu' robh e fhèin ... gu bhith -- gu' robh e 'dol a bhasachainn cuideachd. Rug e air cùl an amhaich air a' bhalach 's bhrìst e 'amhaich.

"Uill," thuirt e ris a' bhalach, "chunnaic thus'," thuirt e, "rud nach fhac' gin riamh roimhe, 's chan innis thus' dha ghin eil' e, 's chan fheuch thu."

'S bhrìst e 'amhaich aig', ann a' sin.

Shin a'd nis Stòiridh Oisean. Bhrìst e amhaich a' bhalaich mas innis e càil dha chàch, [no ri] gin eil' e, 'rud a chunnaic e. Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn'.

## STÒIRIDH OISEAN AS DÈIDH NA FÈINN'

**Date: 18 September 1995**

**Collector: Carol Zall**

[*Note: Three other students were also present while this story was recorded.*]

Uill, 'se a bh'ann, triùir bhràithrean, 's bha aid ann an trì bothanan àiridh. 'S aon oidhche, char iad do laigh' 's. Chaidh Oisean, chaidh e gus a' leabaidh fhèi' 's thàinig feannag staigh. 'S bha i ag iarraidh 'biadh aic', thug Oisean biadh dhith 's, an t-sin, dar a char Oisean laigh', thuirt an fheannag ris, "Uill, thug thu mo shuipeir dhomh, nach toir thu a-nis dhomh ... àit' a' cadail mi?"

"Uill," thuirt Oisean rith', thig staigh air mo chùlaibh co-dhiubh."

Thàinig an fheannag staigh air a chùlaibh 's, chaidh i a's a' leabaidh 's. Dar a dhùisg Oisean 'sa mhadainn, 's a sheall e air a' chluasag, chunnaic e boirionnach cho brèagha 's a chunnaic e a-riamh. 'S thuirt an fheannag ris, "Nis," thuirt i ris, "ma thilg' thu an riochd seo orm-as, an riochd anns an tàinig mi staigh a' raoir, chan urra dhomh-as fuireach mar sheo. Cha bhi mi 'na mo bhoirionnach. Bios agam ri folbh. Nis, ma thilgeas thu gun tàinig mi staigh 'na mo fheannag, chan urrainn dhomh-as, chan urrainn dhomh-as bhith 'na mo bhoirionnach.

"O, *all right*," thuirt Oisean.

Nis, 'sa mhadainn, dar a thàinig a bhràithrean a-staigh, uill, char aid sin mach air a chèil, airson nach do thug iad staigh ... 'n fheannag.

"Uill," thuirt Oisean riuth', "An e sin a' cuid ghilleann nach tug staigh [] an t-eun.

Agus, eh. Bha Oisean nis, bha e cuide ri fear ris [an canear], Para Naona Cleireach. Agus, eh, thàinig Para Cleireach, bha e mach a's a' mhòn' 's, thàinig e staigh le fiadh aig'. 'S thuirt e ri Oisean, "Robh fiadh a-riamh a's an Fhèinn agad cho mò-- cho trom sin?"

Thuirt Oisean, "Cuir air mo bhois e."

Chothromaich Oisean a-bhàn 's an àird mar sin e 's.

"O," thuirt e, " 's minig uair a chunna mi spàg isean a' lòn-dubh nas truim' na sin."

'S Para Naona Cleireach, ghobh es', ghobh e stùirt,<sup>1</sup> 's thil-- eh, thug e na leabhraichean 's na paipearan bha Oisean 'sgriobhadh, thilg e 'sa tein' aid. 'S bha 'chloinn' aig', a' chloinne, bha triùir chloinne a's an taigh. 'S bhiodh a' chloinne, bha iad 'toir mach pairt dhe na paipearan nach do loisg. An fheadhainn mach do losgadh, [thug iad] mach bha iad 'ga' cumail.

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<sup>1</sup>"*stùirt*": huffiness, sulkiness (Dwelly 1988: 909). Thus "he took the huff," i.e., he became huffy.

Bha balach òg a's an taigh, balach comhla ri, ri Oisean, [...]². Thuirt e ris a' bhalach, 'sa mhadainn, "Tiugainn," thuirt e, "tha thu 'tighinn cuide rium-as a' diugh. Tha sinn 'dol a shealg. 'S nì sinn Para Naona Cleireach, nì sinn breugach e."

Dh'fholbh Oisean 's an gill'. 'S thuirt e ris a' ghill, "Stad nis," thuirt, "dè tha thu 'faicinn?"

"Tha mi 'faicinn coill'," thuirt e.

"Uill, dèan thus' air a' choill'."

'S dar a thàinig iad faisg air, "O," thuirt e, "chan e, chan e, chan e coill' a th'ann. 'Se a th'ann luachair."

"Uill, dèan thu -- air -- shuas gus a' luachair."

Thàinig a' gill' sin, thàinig aid.

"Nis," thuirt e ris, "streap an àird ris a' luachair, 's leig leis a' bàrr aig' a thighinn leat."

Shreap am balach an àird gus a' mullach 's leig e leis, 's thàinig de-- thàinig e bhàn, dh'èirich a' plòc an àird. 'S sheall e staigh 's chunnaic e coin, nach fhac' e riamh coin cho brèagha riuth'.

Thuirt e ri', "O," thuirt e ri Oisean --

"Dè tha thu 'faic-- dè thu thu 'faicinn?" thuirt, thuirt Oisean ris a' bhalach.

"O, tha mi 'faicinn coin a' seo. Chan fhac' mi coin riamh na brèa-- na brèagha na iad. 'S tha tè boidheach bhuidhe air, air, 'mullach ac'."

"O, Biorach [] Bhuidheag bhoichd. Leig mach i. An cu mheas' bha riamh a's an Fhèinn."

Thàinig Biorach a' Bhuidheag mach 's o, 's rinn e [*fuss*] cianail ais'.

Thug Oisean aon glaoth às. Bha na monaidhean 's na creagan '*soundaigeadh*'.<sup>3</sup>

"O," thuirt a' balach, 'n gill', "tha mo cheann goirt."

"Tog do cheann, seall dè chì thu."

"O, tha mi 'faicinn drobh, drobh dhe, dhe, dhe fhiadh, fhiadh," thuirt e. "De fiadh reamhar, 's tha mòran diubh agus, tha fear mòr air an toiseach ac'.

"Uill, leig às Biorach a' Bhuidheag."

Leig e às Biorach a' Bhuidheag. Thuirt e ri', "Do leag i e?"

"Leag," thuirt e, thuirt a' gill'.

"Uill, leigeas thu e, 's dar a nì thu sin, feann<sup>4</sup> e 's, agus ròist e a's ghrea-- ghreallach aige fhèin e, agus thoir dhomh-as e ri ith."

"*All right*," thuirt a' gill', "nì mi sin."

<sup>2</sup>A noise on the tape makes this phrase unintelligible. It may be "*aon de na giollan*" ("one of the boys").

<sup>3</sup>Gaelicisation: "sounding".

<sup>4</sup>"*feann*": a form of *fionnadh*, "to flay" (Dwelly, 437).



An sin thuirt e ris a' ghille, "Ma tha an t-acras ort, gheobh sinn biadh dhut." Bha coill' bheith' ann, coille bheith'. Char e bhàn chun a' choille bheith' 's bha luin-dubh ann. Thug Oisean a bhogha-saighead 's, mharbh e, chuir e, aon de na -- isean lòn-dubh, fhuair e e.

"Sheo a-nis," thuirt e ris a' ghill' 's, "dèan thu sin dhut fhèin, nì e do shuipeir dhut."

Dh'ith [...] a' balach [...] ach mas do dh'ith e e, thug Oisean spàg dhith, 's thàinig e air ais gu Para Naona Cleireach. Thilg e a' spàg air a' bhòrd, spàg isean 'lòn-dubh. 'S bhris na casan bhon a' bhòrd.

"Sheo a-nis," thuirt e ris, "shin a'd nis spàg isean lon-duibh."

"O, uill," thuirt e, "chan eil fhios agam, chan fhac' mis' riamh," thuirt e sin, thuirt e, "cho mòr sin."

Nis chum a' chloinn na paipearan 's na leabhraichean bha iad 'faighinn. 'S, eh.

"Nis, thuirt an fheannag ri, ri Oisean, dar a thàinig i, dar thàinig i [suidh], nan tilg' e oirr'eas a' riochd a's an tàinig i staigh, nach b'urra dhith fuireach. 'S thug i dha fàinn', 's chuir e am fàinn' air a' chorràg. 'S thuirt i, "Fhad 's a bhios a' fàinn' sin ort, bios thu beò. Ach ma chailleas thu e, na ma bhios thu [...], bios thu marbh."

'S bha a' gill' òg a's an taigh 's, "Och," thuirt e ri Oisean, "trobhad a-mach gus an allt, gus an glan mi thu."

Thug e leis searadair 's siabunn, 's thug e leis Oisean mach. 'S bha e a' glanadh Oisean. 'S dar a bha 'ga ghlanadh thog e am fàinn' dhen òrdag, 's chuir e air a' clach e.

'S thàinig feannag sin, thug i 'm fàinn' 'na gob 's dh'fholbh i leis, 's dh'aithnich Oisean gu' robh a' bàs a' tighinn air. 'S rug e air cùl amhaich a' bhalaich mar sin 's, bhris e an amhaich dheth. Bhris e an amhaich. Thuirt e, "Chunnaic thus' rud nach fhac' gin riamh roimhe, 's chan inns' thus' dha gin eil' e," 's bhris e 'amhaich.

**C.Z.:** Agus sin agad --

**B.S.:** Shin a'd a-nis Stòiridh Oisean.

## APPENDIX C

### LISTING OF STORIES ON ACCOMPANYING AUDIO CASSETTES

#### **Stories told by Brian Stewart - Two Cassettes**

##### **Cassette One**

1. Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich, 24.9.1993.
2. Stòiridh a' Chaimbeulaich, 2.7.1994.
3. Stòiridh a' Chòcaire + Am Bodach Baigeir (told together), 24.9.1993.
4. Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh, 15.4.1993.
5. Stòiridh an Eich Dhuibh, 30.10.1993.

##### **[Side B]**

1. Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 16.4.1993.
2. Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 24.9.1993.
3. Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 2.7.1994 - continued on next cassette.

##### **Cassette Two**

1. Gille nan Cochulla Craicinn, 2.7.1994.
2. Stòiridh Ladhair, 14.5.1994.
3. Stòiridh Ladhair, 1.4.1995.
4. Stòiridh Loircein, 1.7.1994.
5. Stòiridh Loircein, 31.3.1995.
6. Am Maraiche Màirneal, 14.4.1993.

##### **[Side B]**

1. Am Maraiche Màirneal, 14.4.1993.
2. Am Maraiche Màirneal, 31.3.1995.
3. Am Maraiche Màirneal, 18.9.1995.
4. Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn', 14.4.1993.
5. Oisean as dèidh na Fèinn', 18.9.1995.

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